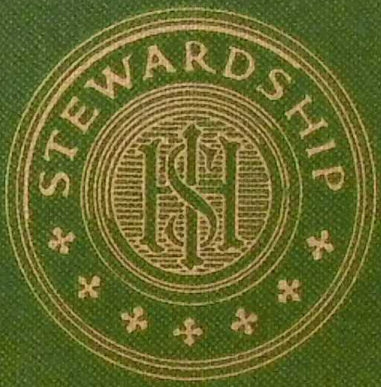
CONCERNING THE COLLECTION



MONROE E. DODD

CONCERNING THE COLLECTION

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A Manual for Christian Stewardship

By

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With Introduction by

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NEW YORK CHICAGO

Fleming H. Revell Company

LONDON AND EDINBURGH

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FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

Printed in the United States of America

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 851 Cass Street
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 99 George Street

INTRODUCTION

THIS book is unique among works on stewardship, which, to-day, are "as thick as the leaves which strew the brooks in Vallambrosa." Valuable and important as such books are, those who need them most, turn away from them the quickest. It is hard to persuade men to read literature which is intended to correct their faults.

In these pages Dr. Dodd makes no attempt to expound an elaborate Christian stewardship. He merely places in the hands of those who have to do with the conduct of public worship, and the leadership of organized groups of Christian people, a vast amount of material which can be readily and quickly used to great advantage. What is here passed on to others has been used in the author's own extraordinary ministry, to touch the hearts and move the wills of congregations, which have been second to none in intelligence and generosity, and hardly equaled by any other minister's in size.

It is highly probable that these brief stewardship Scriptures, stories and prayers will influence people far more than long and pro-

found addresses on stewardship. The plan here outlined by this able, eloquent and successful pastor, will occupy but a few minutes of any church service, and fit in harmoniously with any topic of general discussion. Speaking without irreverence, we may say that hearers are taken unawares, and taught lessons which they did not expect to receive; which reminds us of the old Baptist preacher who baptized multitudes of people. Some one asked him if he preached often on baptism? "No," he answered, "but I often sprinkle it in."

The offering in a church, is part of its worship. It should be dignified and serious but not stiff and solemn. In announcing the offering, some pastors play the clown. Others, anathematize long-suffering people. Still others, look as if a smile were a crime. Just what to do, and how to do it, is a problem with many a hard-driven pastor. This book tells how the collection *ought* to be taken. What pastor will not count such a book a Godsend?

CURTIS LEE LAWS.

The Watchman-Examiner,
New York City.

PREFACE

EXPERIENCE has taught me that more is accomplished in the promotion of the Scriptural stewardship idea by the use of a Scripture with brief comment, a short collection story and an offertory prayer preceding the taking of the offering at each service, than is done in any other way. This keeps the idea *constantly* before *all* the people. If we depend on one or two stewardship sermons a year, they are soon forgotten. If we have a stewardship class only a few attend, and these are usually the members who are already "sold" on the idea.

This book, however, contains a stewardship Scripture, with a brief homily, a collection story and an offertory prayer for each Sunday during the year, and is intended, therefore, to furnish material for pastors, teachers of large organized Sunday school classes, leaders of young people's societies, and missionary societies for use each Sunday in the promotion of stewardship principles.

I would gratefully acknowledge contributions from the following: Revs. W. H. Major, J. R. Hobbs, C. M. Thompson, Clay I. Hudson, H. W. Ellis, Jerome O. Williams, Wallace Bas-

sett, F. F. Brown, Theodore W. Gayer, C. M. Thompson, Jr., John Snape, O. E. Bryan, M. T. Andrews, Henry T. Young, C. W. Elzey, W. W. Hamilton, T. B. Ray, W. W. Melton, L. T. Hastings, J. B. Lawrence, Cortland Myers, and also Ben Johnson, John S. Ramond, O. B. Webb, George E. Hays, J. C. Bond, W. C. Nabors, W. G. Burgin, J. H. Anderson.

The highest aim in asking for the church offering, is not to get money but to secure the consecration of manhood; not coin, but character; not talents of clanking silver, but talents of mastered manhood.

With the conviction that the handling of money for the Master, in both its getting and giving, should be taken out of the realm of emotionalism and placed in that of a firm and fixed principle of life, after the Bible doctrine of stewardship, tithes and offerings, and with the hope and prayer that this collection of Scriptures, stories, and prayers may make some contribution toward that end, this book is sent forth.

M. E. D.

Shreveport.

JANUARY—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Prove me now herewith . . . if I will not . . . pour you out a blessing."—MAL. 3: 10.

GOD is yearning for a chance to bless His people. He challenges them to give Him this chance.

Like the young surgeon who stands fully equipped and thoroughly prepared awaiting only an opportunity:

Like the young legal light who is abiding the day of his first great chance:

When this opportunity is given, their fame breaks upon the world.

Even so, God awaits His opportunity which His people must provide. When they give it to Him, His fame and glory will break upon the world in a new and more wonderful way.

That opportunity will come when God's people bring their whole tithe into His storehouse —the Church.

THE STORY

A YOUNG doctor, just graduated from Touro Infirmary and beginning practice, married a little Jewess, who had graduated as a trained nurse at the same time. She, largely through association with him, had become a Christian. They started out on life's journey with the solemn covenant before God that of all He blessed them with, they would give back into His treasury not less than one-tenth.

Shortly afterwards, a railroad man, who had joined First Church some time before, and had become impressed by their earnestness, and by the evident blessing of God upon them, in their business life as well as in their home, launched out on the same venture—that not less than one-tenth of his income should go back into the Lord's treasury.

Perhaps a year later, a third young man, then struggling to get a foothold in the insurance world, and accumulating a large and expensive family for a young man to care for, having been drawn into the close fellowship existing between the first two, faced earnestly this matter of tithing—of playing the game fairly, and challenging the blessing of God by claiming His promise.

But this young man's income was, apparently,

being stretched to the limit to meet the monthly obligations, and as he said to the railroad man, he just didn't see how he *could* give a tenth to the Lord and meet his other bills. Thinking and praying over it, however, he asked the railroad man one day, what *he* would do, under the same conditions? The railroad man replied that his idea was, that if a fellow would take the Lord's part out of the income first, and lay it on His altar, that He would then help the fellow to meet the other obligations; that that was the way the other two had worked it, and God had kept faith. So this third young man took the plunge—taking out of his salary, the day he drew it, one-tenth, and setting it aside for the Lord.

Shortly after the first of the following month, the railroad man asked the other chap how things were coming along, financially? The insurance chap said, "You know, that thing is almost spooky—the way God has made good, the minute I came across! You know how troubled I was that if I set His tenth aside, I wouldn't have enough left to meet the other bills and payments? Well, shortly after the middle of the month, a policy carrying a premium much more than the tenth, dropped down on me out of the clouds, figuratively speaking. It was a thing I had no idea of getting—no right to expect, and

you won't ever have to argue with me again as to whether God does make good on His blessed promises."

The first young man was a doctor, long and now one of the most beloved deacons of a leading church in his city, and a Bible student of outstanding ability. The young insurance man is now one of the active members of a strong New York insurance firm, who has been blessed of God in a business way as he has in all his home life.

THE PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we are in great need of spiritual blessings. We are deeply conscious of the desert waste and spiritual barrenness which may be found in our lives. And having read in Thy word that if we would bring all our tithes into Thy storehouse Thou wouldst open the windows of heaven and pour us out a blessing, we come to-day with these material gifts—our tithes and offerings, and in so doing, lay claim to Thy promise. We know that Thou art faithful who hast promised, and we shall look with great assurance for the fulfillment of Thy promise to bless us spiritually when we are faithful in material things. Amen.

JANUARY—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord."—PROV. 19: 17.

THERE are five elements in a good loan: 1. The worthwhileness of the way in which the loan is to be used; 2. The security or collateral with which the loan is supported; 3. The character of the individual to whom the loan is made; 4. The assurance concerning the repayment of the loan; 5. The interest or dividends which the loan will draw.

A loan to the Lord, in the way of a gift to the needy, possesses all the qualities and meets all the requirements of a first-class business transaction.

THE STORY

I HAD an officer in my church who for years had given but little. I was preaching a series of sermons on giving and missions. This man became deeply impressed. He told me that his investments had been failing for years and that he was very deeply involved in debt, but was determined to give God His tenth, from then on. He faithfully did this, and within five years was out of debt. His two large mercantile establishments were well stocked with goods, fully paid for, and he was one of the most spiritual and happy men I have ever seen.

THE PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we are thinking to-day, of all the sorrowing, suffering, smitten people who languish in hospitals and that live in orphans' homes, who are dependent upon our benefactions. We recognize the truth of our Saviour saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We thank Thee for having saved us from such a position, and for having entrusted us with enough of this world's goods to enable us to contribute to the amelioration of human suffering. Accept, now, the offerings which we bring for this purpose, and send them upon missions of mercy with healing in their wings. Through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

JANUARY—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9: 7.

MUST I give my money? No, it is not *must*. There is no absolute imperative necessity about it. The churches can be closed up and the preachers can go to work at something else. The orphans' homes and hospitals can be abandoned. The Christian colleges and seminaries can go out of business. The missionaries can be called home.

No, you need not give. But you must choose between this and other alternatives. Either give, or let all good causes die, or leave the giving to others while you enjoy their fruits.

Better than all, you *may* give and keep all good causes going and enjoy the fruits of your own labours.

THE STORY

A POOR widow woman, having a family to support, was visited by her pastor one Saturday afternoon. On the table of the living room she had ten twenty-five cent pieces, which represented her earnings as a washwoman for the week just ending. She knew that the pastor was raising money for a worthy cause, and she placed one of the twenty-five cent pieces in his hand. He looked for a moment at the gift and the remaining nine twenty-five cent pieces on the table and said, "My good woman, if this two dollars and a half is all that you have for your week's labour you cannot afford to give the tithe. You had better keep all for the support of your family." The woman looked into his face, with tears in her eyes, and said, "Bless your life, pastor, the Lord can make nine-tenths go farther than I can make ten-tenths go."

THE PRAYER

Our Father, we come, now, to worship Thee with our tithes and offerings. May this part of our service of worship bring us close to Thee, even as our praying and preaching and singing does. Help us to be conscious of our partnership and fellowship with Thee, in both making and managing money. And, now, as we worship Thee with our gifts, grant us Thy blessing and Thy favour, for Christ's sake. Amen.

JANUARY—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth."

—DEUT. 8: 18.

THE Heavenly Father wants to be remembered by His children. "When this you see, remember me," is the meaning of many a love-token.

God has filled the earth with treasures untold. He has also endowed His people with energy, industry, and intelligence to translate these natural resources into wealth. Now, this wealth is His love token to His children, and He says to them, "When you look upon wealth remember the God who made it possible for you to have it for a while."

"When this wealth you see,
Remember Me,"
Says the God above,
To all who love
His Word, and work, and way.

THE STORY

A MAIDEN lady of uncertain age, who had inherited a modest fortune, including two or three good sized farms, sat in the congregation while the collection was being taken, and gave nothing. At the close of the service she came to me, and holding out her hand, placed a quarter in mine as she said, "Brother Pastor, I am moved this morning by your sermon. I sat through the service wishing that I had Brother ———'s money" (mentioning the name of a man of wealth in our church). "If I had his money I'd give every cent that you ask for today. Oh, how I wish I were rich! This church would never want for money. But I am not, so all I can do is to give the widow's mite, and here it is."

If the widow's mite were measured by what she had left, this woman gave less than nothing. There is a judgment day for people who hide behind that poor woman's gift.

THE PRAYER

Our Father, Thou hast filled the earth and the air with vast natural resources. Thou hast endowed us with the energy and the will to work. Thou hast given us the knowledge and wisdom which enables us, through our energy, to translate these natural resources into wealth. Thou, Thyself, hast given us the power to make money. Help us, now, to remember Thee in the handling and distributing of this money. Having gotten it from Thee, help us to use it for Thy glory, and for the world's good; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

FEBRUARY—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much."—LUKE 16: 10–11.

MONEY is the "least." Spiritual power is the "larger." Unfaithfulness in handling that which is least (money) makes it impossible for God to bestow that which is larger (power). This explains the lack of spiritual power in many individuals and churches. Having been untrue in handling money, by robbing God of His part, God cannot trust them with the true riches, lest like Simon, the sorcerer (Acts 8: 18), they use these also for selfish and personal ends. There is no need to pray until we pay. Spiritual blessing is conditioned upon material mastery. Prove to God that He can trust you by handling money aright, and then He will trust you with greater gifts.

THE STORY

WINIFRED ELIZABETH, the tiny daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Beaven of Rochester, N. Y., was deeply interested in the children of Japan. In her childish eagerness she confided to her loved ones that, when she grew up, she would go to Japan as a missionary. But she did not wait for that far-off time. During her babyhood years, she saved a large share of the money which came to her, in her bank which was shaped like a ship. It was her "gospel ship" for the children of Japan.

In the wisdom of God, she never became a missionary. Her little life went back to Him in her seventh year, but the "gospel ship" was half-filled with money. Her distinguished father has written a beautiful message out of his heart-ache. The proceeds from this booklet, go to the cause so dear to the heart of his child. Suppose that little life had not brought its money to the feet of Jesus? Her dreams would never have come true; but as it is, her gospel ship sails on down the years, across to Japan, too.

We can pray for missions and talk of missions, but how much faster our prayers travel, when they are borne in our gospel ships of dollars!

THE PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help us to become as little children. Thy Son has told us "of such are the kingdom of heaven." Give us that joyous, full-souled love for a lost Orient which filled the heart of little Winifred Elizabeth. We know that love was heaven-sent. Inspire us now,—challenge us this very moment—to a more worthy plan of giving, giving of self and time and energy and money that Thy Kingdom may come and Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

FEBRUARY—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be rich in good works; laying up in store a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed."—1 TIM. 6: 17–19.

HERE is a charge to the rich! It is a fourfold charge: Christians are warned not to depend upon wealth, for like all temporal things it is uncertain; they are warned that wealth is no proper occasion for pride; they are urged to do good, that is to be *rich* in *good* works; and to be liberal, that is, ready to distribute their means for worthy purposes.

Here, also, is a twofold reminder: That God is our only safe dependence, and that He is the giver of all wealth.

Here, finally, is offered a twofold motive to liberality and well-doing: That in so doing we store up a good foundation for the testing time, and that we lay hold on the life, which is life, indeed.

THE STORY

I BROADCAST a service in Oakland, California, and at the time of taking the offering genially remarked that I had heard that, in a radio service, at the time of the collection, every Scotchman listening in, tuned out until the collection was over. Within ten days I received seventeen letters from as many Scotchmen (one of them from a sea captain two thousand miles out in the Pacific), each enclosing one dollar for the collection and each saying: "Although Scotch, I listened in, through the whole service."

THE PRAYER

Heavenly Father, accept us this day, we pray Thee, with our offering, for, first of all, would we give Thee ourself, our best self. The best for Thee, Lord—the best for Thee! Accept it, we pray Thee, in the name of Thy great gift to us, Jesus Christ Thy Son and our Saviour. Amen.

FEBRUARY—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"As Christ also loved the church."—EPH. 5:25.

IT is your Church and my Church and Christ's Church and our Church. It is a blood-bought and spirit-born and heaven-redeemed Church. It is a God-glorifying and service-rendering Church. It is a helper to all humanity, an inspirer of youth, an instructor of childhood, a comforter of old age.

What does your Church and my Church mean to you and me?

What do you and I mean to our Church?

What do you and I and our Church together mean to the community in which we live and to the whole wide world?

Would we miss our Church if it went out of existence?

Would our Church miss us if we died?

Would the world miss us, and our Church, if we all passed out?

THE STORY

THE coming Sunday was Mission Day in the Sunday school and church.

A man and his wife were discussing what they should do. They were living in a very modest cottage. They were, necessarily, living very simple lives. At that moment, the man was walking the streets, looking for a job, and reserve resources were about exhausted. Could they give anything, at all, to the mission offering?

After silent prayer, each wondered what the other would say. When the silence was broken, they were of one mind—that they would give ten dollars to the mission offering, the next Sunday. They were happy for having done so.

The following week the man secured a position which took him into the oil fields. He secured a small personal interest in the business. He and his wife continued to pray while they prospered. They continued to give while they got. Before his death they were writing checks into the thousands. Since his death she has given many thousands more to all good causes. They trusted God. God found He could trust them.

THE PRAYER

(For Foreign Missions)

By our offerings to-day, our Father, may we "preach the gospel" to all nations. It is ours to "give" or "go." We give this morning that others may go, presenting our gifts in the name of Him who gave His all, and who gave to us our great commission. Amen.

FEBRUARY—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"And Jesus went about . . . teaching . . . preaching . . . and healing."—MATT. 4:23.

CHRIST'S full program of ministry to needy humanity included:

1. Healing for the body;
2. Instruction for the mind;
3. Salvation for the soul.

Christ's churches to-day are carrying out that full program as a service of:

1. Benevolence to the body in orphans' homes, hospitals, and relief work;
2. Education to the mind, in schools, colleges, seminaries, and missionary training institutions;
3. Salvation to the heart, in evangelistic and missionary enterprises, at home and abroad.

This program includes every possible human need—physical, mental, spiritual; renders every possible service to every possible class, race, nationality, and age, of humanity.

THE STORY

A LITTLE girl climbed on the arm of my chair, affectionately leaned her head on my shoulder, and asked me what she could do for Jesus? I told her of the orphans, and the orphanage, and how they needed help, just at that time. Her blue eyes sparkled as she told me of her determination to help them, and away she ran to play with the other children.

It was a month later that I was called to conduct her funeral services, at the close of which her mother gave me a dollar and five cents with these words: "This is the money she saved for the orphans. Every penny represents a great effort and sacrifice for her. She was so anxious for you to come, that she might give it to you before she went away. Send it to the orphanage with her dying prayer."

I sent it immediately, and told the Superintendent her story. He, and others, told it to many people, and many dollars were given as a result. Many children were fed and clothed, and many people, both young and old, have caught her spirit, and many things have been done for Jesus, because of her.

THE PRAYER

Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast made us partners with Thee in the great business of carrying on Thy kingdom in the world. We are grateful that Thou hast made the plan plain, so that it is easy for us to find Thy will in this matter. May our offering, this morning, be given in love, received in mercy, used according to Thy wisdom, and result in good to men and glory to Thyself. Amen.

MARCH—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"That, when it shall fail."—LUKE 16:9 (R. V.).

MONEY is mighty, but it is not *al*mighty. It can do a great many things, but it cannot do everything.

It fails, when love is gone, and cannot be brought back. It fails, when hope has fled, and cannot be restored. It fails, when faith has been broken, and cannot be mended. It fails, when death knocks at the door, and that horrible hand cannot be stayed.

Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust. Make all you can, but don't "can" all you make. It will fail you in the end.

THE STORY

"IS your husband much of a provider, Malindy?"

"He ain't nothin' else, ma'am. He's gwine to get some new furniture, providin' he gets the money; he's gwine to get the money, providin' he goes to work; he's gwine to work, providin' the job suits him. I never see such a providin' man in all muh days."

THE PRAYER

Thou God our Father, who art the Author of every good and precious gift, we give Thee thanks for the Unspeakable Gift, even Christ our Saviour and Lord. As tokens of Thy bounties to; and Thy care and love for us, we bring our humble gifts now and lay them at Thy feet. And we pray that Thou wilt accept them as from hearts sincere and grateful; in the name of Jesus who gave Himself for us. Amen.

MARCH—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Take heed, and beware of covetousness."
—LUKE 12:15.

"Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness."—ROM. 1:29.

IT is well that we be warned against the blight and curse of covetousness.

1. Covetousness coarsens and hardens the character.

2. Covetousness makes the heart cold and unsympathetic toward human need.

3. Covetousness causes a person to edge up on, if not fall entirely into, shady business transactions.

4. Covetousness, when once in full possession of a man's person and powers, will lead him to do all sorts of damnable things to get money.

5. Covetousness is described as idolatry (Col. 3:5). It is the worship of gold in the place of God.

6. God forbids the appointment of any minister, deacon, or other official to a position of trust and responsibility, who does not hate covetousness (Ex. 18:21. 1 Tim. 3:3. 1 Tim. 3:8).

THE STORY

A CERTAIN small church was located in a country section where the people were poor, and felt they could not be expected to give much to its support. It needed paint, the windows were out, and it had gotten in such a state that it was practically impossible to continue using it, without repairs. There was no money in the treasury and the pastor's salary was behind and the church heavily in debt.

The Official Board met to discuss the situation. Things seemed hopeless, and they had about decided to disband. Finally, one of them, who happened to be the miller, told the rest that he would like to have the church repaired and would pay for it himself if he had the money, but as they all knew, he was a poor man, and had a large family, therefore, he was unable to assume such an amount.

He told them, however, that he had a proposition he wanted to make to them. "If you will leave the finances of this church to me for the next year," he said, "and not ask me any questions about how I am doing it, I will pay all the debts of the church, paint it, and put it in first class condition and get it to working in such a way as to be a source of pride to all of us."

They tried to get the miller to tell his plan, but he would not. They accepted his proposition more because they knew of nothing that could be done, and felt that whatever his idea was, it was probably better than nothing.

Gradually, as the weeks passed, the church members saw a decided change. The church was painted and repaired, the debts paid and much given to missions, education, and benevolences. This aroused new courage and faith in all of them. At the end of the year, their church had money in the treasury, and was the most thriving one in their section of the country, and growing rapidly. All this time the miller had refused to tell how he was financing the church. At the end of the year the official board met again, this time full of hope and assurance.

In response to their eager questioning, the miller told them how he had financed the church during the past year. When they had brought their corn and wheat to him to grind into meal and flour, he had taken a tenth from each of them and turned it into the Lord's treasury. They hadn't missed it, and with the small amount taken regularly from each one, there had been an abundance for the church. The plan seemed so simple and the result so satisfactory, that they all agreed they should have followed it all the time.

This goes to show what can be done by a church with all its members working together and giving according to God's plan.

I don't mean to suggest that anyone try to get other church members to tithe by taking it out, without their knowledge, but if everyone would see the advantage in all doing their duty, what a wonderful institution the church would be!

THE PRAYER

Blessed Lord, help us to remember the price of Calvary, and to realize that we were not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood so freely shed upon the Cross. Knowing that "the gift without the giver is bare," we surrender ourselves to Thee with our offerings. Use them and use us to Thy glory, we pray. Amen.

MARCH—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"For we are labourers together with God."
—1 Cor. 3:9.

"GOLDEN RULE" NASH said: "After we put this divine law into operation in our factory, I had a feeling that there was something sacred about our plant."

All work becomes invested with a divine glory, when the one performing it realizes that he is in partnership with the divine Father. The drab monotony and drudgery of work is gone when we remember that God, the Almighty, is working with us and we with Him.

Whether the work be at a carpenter's bench or behind a mahogany desk, whether it be digging ditches or counting coin, whether it be that of the president of a concern or the lowest labourer, whether it be of brain or brawn, if it be in partnership with God, it is equally dignified and glorious.

THE STORY

I WAS asked to take up a collection during some Billy Sunday meetings, several years ago. I had listened to many stories of many kinds by preachers and laymen in taking offerings in this same meeting.

When my turn came I had a brief word to say concerning God's ownership, stewardship, and tithing, and quoted, hurriedly, a number of Scriptural passages bearing on these themes.

The "pans" were passed and more than two thousand dollars was the result of this loose offering. I was told, on good authority, that this amount was far in excess of any other single offering, of a similar character.

The Scriptures, on any given subject, will touch and move the hearts of men as nothing else.

THE PRAYER

Dear Lord, our hearts rejoice in worship to Thee. Thou hast done so much for us. Thou hast given us Thy Holy Book, Thy sacred Truth, Thine only begotten Son, and the presence of Thy Holy Spirit. Surely Thou hast done all things well. Thou hast honoured believers with a place in the progress of Thy kingdom in the earth. Thou hast given so much that our gifts seem so very small. But we worship Thee now with our gift. Bless each soul here, and use us in the progress of Thy Gospel. We ask it in His Holy Name. Amen.

MARCH—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"For none of us liveth to himself."—ROM. 14: 7.

IT is only in relationship to, and coöperation with, others, that life is made worth while. A lone letter of the alphabet may have no significance whatever. But properly related to other letters it becomes a sermon, a poem, a philosophy. Musical notes standing alone are nothing. But related to, and coöperating with, other notes, they become inspiring symphonies and uplifting oratorios. One figure is a lone digit and of little consequence, but the infinite variety of combinations which ten of them may form, constitute a great science—even mathematics. If you would make your life count for the most for yourself and the world, relate it properly to other lives, in business and in religion.

Your gift, by itself, can accomplish little, but joined with the gifts of others in your Co-operative Church Budget, will work wonders.

THE STORY

ONE day a mother said to her little daughter, "Mamma is going out this evening, and she wants her little girl to be a *good* girl." The child began to cry, and in an endeavour to quieten her, the mother went to the sideboard, took from the dish a big cluster of grapes and said, "If you will be a good girl, and not cry, I will give you this bunch of grapes, all for yourself."

The victory was quickly won, and the mother assured that her little girl would not be naughty. When the mother came home about midnight, the nurse told her that the child had kept her word. "Cry any more?" "No." "Go to bed at nine?" "Yes." "All right?" "Yes."

The mother climbed the stairway, and passed through the nursery to where her little darling lay asleep, in her white bed. Stirred as many another has been by the beauty of a sleeping child, the mother leaned over and kissed her noticing as she did so, a flushed spot on each cheek. The little thing opened her eyes and seeing it was her mother, held out her hand, in which was a stem with three large grapes, and said, "Mama, the best for you." She had

thought of mother, and saved her the best grapes on the bunch.

It was but a few short days later when the flushed spots told their terrible story, and the little white casket took the place of the child-bed. The mother in dry-eyed grief is walking the floor, and saying, "Why did God take my child? She was all I had. Others have many. I had money. Others are poor." With rebellion in her heart, she refused all entreaties from her husband, to leave the death-room.

Walking back and forth, she finally saw the little stem and the three withered grapes. In her anxiety, she had forgotten them. Picking them up, she remembered the baby hand that held them and the sweet childish words, "Mama, the best for you." Tears came for the first time. A heavenly vision seemed to be realized, and in a few moments she was on her knees by the little coffin sobbing out her new-found harmony with the will of God, saying, "The best for Thee, Lord! The best for Thee! My baby was the best I had, and I give my best to Thee."

THE PRAYER

Our Father, our best gifts are small compared with Thine unspeakable gift, but here, to-day, we would bring our best self, our best years, our best thoughts, our best purposes, our best devotion, our best service. Our hearts are not content to offer Thee that which is crippled, and soiled, and imperfect. We would give Thee our best. We would bring the firstfruits of our heart and life. Amen.

FIRST QUARTER—EXTRA SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Bring ye all the tithes."—MAL. 3: 10.
"Upon the first day of the week."—1 COR. 16: 2.

GOD has a physical plan for this universe. The sun, moon, stars, and earth move according to that plan.

He has a spiritual plan for His kingdom.

He surely must have a financial plan for His Church. It is unthinkable that the God of order and system and law in everything else, would leave so important a matter as financing His Church to haphazard methods, mere emotional decisions, and "as you like it" plans.

American churches, alone, have more than one and one-half billion dollars worth of property. Leave that to haphazard plans? No!

God's plan is for God's people to bring God's money to God's house on God's day for God's glory (Mal. 3: 10, 1 Cor. 16: 2).

THE STORY

A DES MOINES man, who was converted in one of Billy Sunday's meetings, was asked, for current expenses by the church with which he united, the sum of twelve dollars and fifty cents for the year. When informed of the matter, he protested at the smallness of the sum. "For," said he, "I used to spend more than that for a single night's pleasure." He and his wife began to read the Bible to ascertain what it taught about giving, and the result was, that during the first six months of the year, he had given twenty-seven times twelve dollars and fifty cents, or three hundred and thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents, and has never since given less than that. The Book of Malachi settled the basis of his giving.

THE PRAYER

Our Father, we come now to worship Thee with our tithes and offerings. As we bring to Thee a part of that, which out of Thy bounty Thou hast given us, may we realize that we are Thine—that Thou hast bought us with the sufferings of Calvary and with Thine own precious blood. May we recognize, to-day, that all our countless blessings—blessings temporal and spiritual—have come to us from Thee.

As we make our offering, just now, touch our hearts with the infirmity of the suffering about us; help us to look with compassion on the needy. Give to us a vision of a lost and perishing world. Enable us to overcome our selfishness and to give our substance and ourselves to Thee, prompted in all we do, by Thy own great sacrifice for us.

Take the little we bring, and break it in Thine own great hands. Multiply it by Thy grace, till what we bring, shall be bread to the famishing multitudes, and shall bring honour and glory to the Name of our Saviour, in whose Name we ask it all. Amen.

APRIL—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Give an account of thy stewardship."—LUKE 16: 2.

EACH individual is endowed with certain gifts.

There are the gifts of personality, a geniality, friendliness, and cordiality. To some is given the talent to write, speak, teach or sing. Upon others, is bestowed the power of leadership, and, upon many, the no less gift of following. Some are endowed with executive ability, the faculty to manage men, or the genius of organization. Many possess the means of making money, others of earning it. But, for all these gifts, we are asked to: "Give an account of thy stewardship." We must give an account to our own conscience. We must answer to society, which furnished the means for our exercise of these gifts. We must answer to God, who gave these gifts. This is our stewardship.

THE STORY

I WAS preaching on missions. An elderly lady, who was a widow, listened attentively. At the close of the services she came and gave me quite a nice little sum of money for missions, and said, "You see this old hat! I have been wearing it for three years. For two years I have been saving this money for a new one, but I had rather wear the old one another year, and instead of a new hat, have some part in sending the Gospel to those who have it not, and for whom our Lord died." Surely she had the spirit of the Lord Jesus!

THE PRAYER

Our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the honour Thou hast conferred upon us, in entrusting to our hands a portion of this world's goods. Help us to be faithful stewards of these possessions. Help us to remember, that we shall be called to account for our stewardship. When the great day for auditing our accounts arrives, may our books be found in order, that we may have no fear nor regrets in that day: through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

APRIL—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared."—PSALM 76: 11.

THE making of vows is heartily approved in the Scriptures. It is the hasty, insincere vow which is condemned (Prov. 20: 25). The sincere vow becomes a solemn compact and covenant, and is good for character and conduct.

The Nazarite vow of the Old Testament became a great order. Paul gives us an example of the New Testament approval of vows (Acts 18: 18). But "vows made in storms, are forgotten in calms."

There are two motives for making solemn vows:

1. Penitence
2. Gratitude

Penitence for sins performed and gratitude for blessings received.

Vows are to be made in the dedication of property to God (Gen. 28: 22).

Vows are to be made in the dedication of children to God (1 Sam. 1: 11).

Vows are to be made in the dedication of self to God (Num. 6: 2).

THE STORY

THE largest giver in our church is a poor widow-woman. She tries to carry on a modest little business that her husband left her. Her income is small, but she signs her budget-card every year for a liberal amount, and pays regularly. One day I was looking over a special free-will offering we had taken, and found her check for two hundred dollars. I was astounded, and asked the secretary what it meant. She said, "That is nothing new, Mrs. ——— does that way all the time," and she went back and showed me her record.

I waited for a quiet opportunity, and, one day, asked her how she did it? I said, "You have a boy in college, and no income but your own labour. How do you do it?" Her reply was, "All that I have belongs to my Master. I want to do it for Him. I could not be happy if I did not."

And there, beloved, is the secret: She "wanted to do it." It was such liberality in the Philippian church that Paul commended, "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

THE PRAYER

Holy Father, Thou art the Great Giver! Thou didst not withhold Thine Only Begotten Son. Help us, Lord, that we may love Thee supremely, with something of the same love that Thou hast manifested toward the world which was lost in sin, and toward us, with all of our unworthiness and unfaithfulness. For Christ's sake. Amen.

APRIL—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury; and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury. For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."—MARK 12:41–44.

CHRIST watched the people as they cast in their gifts. He was interested in the givers. The rich and poor were noticed by Him. The amounts of their gifts were a matter of concern to Him. How important these offerings must have been in the thought of Christ! How important they are now!

The first church-fuss recorded in the Book of Acts was about the money question. The last church-fuss, multitudes of people know, will be about church finances. I really believe that nine-tenths of all our church troubles, come from this one thing.

If an individual is careless and indifferent as

to his finances, he will have much and ceaseless trouble with his friends and business associates. The family that has not a financial plan is soon headed for the rocks of dissension, discord, and division. In God's Word the Church is spoken of as "a family." It is spoken of as "the body." Shall this body, this family, not have a financial system?

To the family of God, the local church, is committed a great business, a sacred trust. Every church should have such a care for its good name and honour that it will seek for, secure, and tell to all its members, the best plan; enlist all in this plan, secure pledges from every member, and a covenant that they will faithfully perform the doing of the same. Such a plan will save both the church and its members, and will cover a multitude of faults.

In our church we have a good financial system. We urge each member to worship God with his offerings, and to give as God has prospered him. We are now going to give you an opportunity to worship God with your gifts. Remember, that the Lord loveth a cheerful giver.

THE STORY

I STROLLED in Paternoster Row, London, one afternoon, gazing into the windows of publishers, famous the world over. There I saw marvelous arrays of superbly bound and beautifully printed volumes, masterpieces of the bookbinder's and printer's art. While looking in one resplendent window and coveting a particularly lovely set of Shakespeare, my eye caught sight of a folder, on which was a fine engraving and this legend: "George Muller, the man the people gave seventy-five million dollars and he never asked a man for a cent."

My thoughts were at once transferred from desirable books to a remarkable man. Countless orphans cared for, commodious buildings erected to accommodate them; other mighty undertakings; never a pressing need unprovided for, and the only appeal he made was to his God. And I thought, if God's people would but exercise faith as George Muller, every need of our vast enterprises would always be satisfied on time. Yea, God's own people, exercising such a faith, themselves would readily supply all needed funds, knowing that they had an unfailing source of wealth in the God whom they trusted.

THE PRAYER

O God, our Father, we recognize Thee as the giver of every good and perfect gift. Out of the abundance of Thy rich gifts unto us, we come now to make this offering in Thy Name and for Thy glory. Let Thy blessings be upon every gift and upon each giver. We ask and offer all in the Name of Thy Son, who gave Himself for us. Amen.

APRIL—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"We love him, because he first loved us."
—1 JOHN 4: 19.

DEAR friends, this is the foundation of all our gifts, and of all our love. God so loved that He gave. He *so* loved. He *gave*—the best gift He had, His only begotten Son. We are saved, and salvation is free. But oh, how it cost God! How it cost Christ! Love will always cost. It is so expensive to love. If you love Christ and a lost world, it will cost you. If you do not love, the tender and appealing service you are in now will not affect your heart and your love. Paul said, "The love of Christ constraineth us." The constraining power of Christ's love will make a mighty pull on every Christian, here, to make a worthy love offering, for the sake of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. Christ demonstrated His love. How shall we manifest our love?

We are trying, through our Mission Boards, to give this Gospel to all the world. Just now, there are debts on our Boards that are badly handicapping our work at home and abroad. Now, in making this offering—this free-will-love-

offering, you will have part in Christ's program for saving the world. We will make our offering, and you will make yours, and all of these together will be used to help to give the knowledge of God's love to all the people of the world. We are a great people. We have been wonderfully blessed. God has used us in a mighty way. How glad we should be, everyone of us, to join with all our people, in making a worthy gift to our King!

A worthy people delight to do a worthy thing. We are a worthy people. This is a worthy and a mighty undertaking. Let each of us come to this treasury—Christ's treasury—with an offering that will be big, liberal and beautiful, an offering that will be worthy of our Christ.

THE STORY

TWO traveling men, one a Jew the other a Scotchman, arrived at a small town, late one evening. After supper, they strolled forth to interview certain customers, who were usually found in their places of business until late hours, and were chagrined to find all stores closed. In order to pass the evening away they sought the moving picture palace, but that too was closed. Their curiosity was thoroughly aroused, and seeking information from a chance passer-by, they were told that all the people were attending a tent revival, on a near-by vacant lot.

They decided to visit the revival, and arriving late they could find seats only near the front. Just as they were seated, the evangelist arose to take the collection, and said, "I am expecting a large collection to-night, and every man that I look straight in the eye, I am expecting to give at least one dollar." Just then, he looked the Jew squarely in the eye. The Jew fainted and the Scotchman carried him out.

THE PRAYER

O Lord God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we devoutly thank Thee that Thou hast given us such a blessed Saviour,—One whose mercies are ever about us, and whose grace is never-failing. His tender and forgiving love is better than that of a mother, and His forbearance with us in our sins makes us constantly ashamed. We would give thanks to Thee, not by word of mouth alone, but in deed and in truth. Therefore, we bring our offerings as an expression of gratitude, and pray Thee to accept them in His Name. Amen.

MAY—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

Paul adds one of the Saviour's statements not recorded by the Gospel writers when he says in Acts 20: 35, "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

MANY who do not study this passage closely, make receiving a sin, and giving a virtue. This is wrong. They are a part of the same thing, and both have their place. Receiving is a rare privilege, indeed, and we should be very poor if we never passed through this experience. But receiving is a blessing only when it leads to something else, bigger and better. It is a blessing when it is a means toward an end. It is a decided curse, when it becomes an end in itself.

There is nothing in the world that makes us a recipient, with the expectation of our becoming a giver. Our great nation makes us receive many things. We receive liberty, the right to hold property, the right to protect our homes, the right to worship God as we please. All of this is given with the full understanding that we contribute our part in taxes, suffrage, and, if need be, life, to the good of the state. We re-

ceive that we may give. The giving is the last and the greatest thing connected with the whole process. We might carry the thought into the realm of learning. The state does not educate, nor do the denominations, simply to satisfy a thirst for knowledge. This is all done to put us in a position to serve humanity.

Receiving is not a sin, but it is not the greatest, and final good thing, connected with our lives. Receiving is but a John the Baptist, blazing a way through the forest for something bigger and better to follow. It is but the springtime, and, as such, simply prepares the way for the coming summer of giving. Crown all your receiving, to-day, with the purpose of it all—*worthy giving.*

THE STORY

THE pastor of the church sat talking to the father and the mother. It was a home up a hollow, just out of town, such a sad errand and a difficult task. That morning, a son, a child of twelve years, had been run over by a car on the highway. For two hours the boy lingered in the hospital, and then passed away. Soon the truck in which the casket was being brought home appeared over the rise of the hill. Four men including the pastor brought the white casket into the room.

Soon the parents were both calm again, and were talking. The day was Saturday. "It was just Tuesday," the father began, "I got ——— and his older brother and talked to them. I asked them what kind of men they wanted to be and told them of Jesus." A little later, an uncle, who was with the boy when he died, told of the last moments of the child. The little fellow was ready to meet his Lord.

The pastor began to think. For many months the father had been an active, interested member of the church. The church of which he was a member, was a strong, full-time church. Not many years ago the Kentucky Baptist State Board of Missions supplemented the salary of

the pastor of that church. Not many years ago the church meant little to the cause, but the few dollars from the State Board kept the candle from going out.

Just a few dollars, just a supplemented salary, but it kept one candlestick in place which, to-day, is a power for God.

The soul of that one boy, far outweighs all the State Mission money spent in that community. But he is just one of hundreds who, through the years, have been led to the Saviour through that church. Money invested in State Missions, brings large and blessed returns. Have you made such an investment?

THE PRAYER

(*For State Missions*)

O God, our Heavenly Father, we bring an offering this morning for Thy work "in Judaea" —our beloved State. Consecrate it and us to the mighty mission of winning the multiplied thousands at our doorsteps, who know not our Christ. May we use these goodly gifts for the glory of our God. Amen.

MAY—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury."
—MARK 12:41.

CHRIST sees the group in every church who do not come to the treasury at all. They claim Him as their Saviour. They look to Him for His blessings, day by day. They sing hymns about Him. They pray in His Name. Some day, they hope to stand in His presence—redeemed by His blood. But they do not meet Him at the treasury. Surely His message to this group is: "Thou shalt not appear before the Lord empty: every man shall give as he is able." "Bring an offering and come into His courts."

Jesus sees the group which gives as a matter of respectability. There is no careful thought, no earnest prayer back of their offering. Grudgingly, reluctantly, those who compose this group dole out the minimum required by respectability. They are members of the church. Their self-respect will not allow them to frankly decline all responsibility for their Saviour's work. They shrink from being classified with the group of

nominal Christians, who positively refuse to contribute to the support of Christ's kingdom. Many of them are prosperous. Their names are prominent in social and civic movements. They support the various clubs and other organizations, to which they belong, with liberality, but at the Lord's treasury all generous impulses seem to be frozen. Coldly, formally, without joy, they bring their meagre offerings as a stern duty, demanded by respectability. And the Saviour watches. His pointed question to each of their hearts is: "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive?" His solemn warning to each one of them is: "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth."

He sees the group—slowly but steadily increasing—of those who come up to the treasury with gladness in their hearts. They acknowledge themselves stewards—trustees—of their possessions. Many of them are tithers. They have adopted and are practicing the tithe as the minimum when they approach the Lord's treasury. They believe and accept the Scriptures which say: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse." "The tithe . . . is the Lord's." "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."

Some of them have gone beyond the tithe and continuously bring larger proportions of their incomes to the Lord's treasury for use in kingdom work. Some of the offerings bear the red marks of sacrifice. Those who bring them have quietly and prayerfully determined: "Neither will I offer . . . unto the Lord my God of that which cost me nothing." Jesus sees. He knows. He understands.

His eyes are lighted with interest—with divine love. On His matchless face, varying emotions register themselves. Those who come up to the treasury, where He awaits them, are His own—bought with a price. Oh, that we may but look into His face, as we bring our offerings! Oh, that we may but see His poignant sorrow, as we appear before Him—"empty." Could we but see His deep grief as we come formally, moved by mere respectability, with reluctant offerings! Could we but see the look of divine approval on His face as joyously we recognize our stewardship and meet Him at the treasury!

"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

"Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

"And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury."

THE STORY

I WAS conducting revival services in a college in Oklahoma. A fine lad appeared for conference in my office. He felt called to mission service. Did I think he could preach the Gospel, and how could he prepare for such task? This settled, he retired happy.

A few days later he came again. What could he do while in training? It would be years before he could get to the firing line. He was told to win his fellow-students. This he was doing, but what more? He could do missionary service during vacation seasons with neighbours. He had thought of that, too.

Then he revealed the fact that he was part Indian. Oil wells flowed on his land. What could these wells do? They could send missionaries now. They could educate men and women for world-tasks. This was what he wanted to know, and he went away determined and supremely happy.

THE PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, Thou art great and greatly to be praised. Thou art the Maker of heaven and earth. Thou art owner of all things —the earth, the sea, the land, the gold, the silver—all are Thine.

By Thine own love and goodness we have been enriched. Thy Son though rich, became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich.

Help us to share with Him in the salvation of the world. Bless our gifts and use them wherever there is need. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

MAY—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? . . . shall receive an hundred fold."

—MATT. 19: 27–29. Also MARK 10: 28–30.

IN the above Scripture Jesus teaches that God pays dividends on investments. This truth is illustrated in four experiences in the life of Abraham.

1. Abraham is called to give his life in service, leaving home and kindred (Gen. 12: 1). He obeys. His reward was a great name and Canaan as an inheritance (Gen. 12: 2–7).

2. Abraham has returned from a sojourn in Egypt, and strife has arisen between his servants and those of Lot (Gen. 13: 5–7). Abraham's influence with the Canaanite and Perizzite was at stake. So he gives the best of his possessions to Lot. The Lord appears to confirm the promise and enlarge his inheritance (Gen. 13: 14–18).

3. Another crisis arises in the life of Abraham. With Jehovah's help, a victory is won and Lot rescued. In gratitude he pays his tithe (Gen. 14: 20).

Again Jehovah appears (Gen. 15:1). Jehovah is his reward and shield. The inheritance is again enlarged (Gen. 15:5).

4. Abraham has reached the great crisis of his life. He must offer his son as a burnt offering (Gen. 22:1–2). The reward follows as before. Because he has not withheld his son, the inheritance is once again enlarged. His enemies will not stand in his way (Gen. 22:15–18).

To summarize: In the first experience Abraham becomes a steward of his life, in the second, a steward of his influence, in the third, a steward of his possessions, and, in the fourth, a steward of his children. In each case, a hundredfold more is received than given.

THE STORY

A PASTOR and his wife had conducted a revival meeting in a small town in the mountains of Kentucky, and the Lord had given a gracious revival. Many people were saved, many children brought to God, and the Spirit of the Lord outpoured in the entire community. At the closing service, the people were given a chance to make an offering for the workers. The gift was liberal for all people brought something.

When the workers were at the station waiting for the train on which they were to leave, great crowds gathered to wish them good-bye. A poor, bare-footed, ill-clad, embarrassed, little girl lingered near the minister's wife, seeking an opportunity to say something. The worker put her arms about the child immediately, who said, "I wish I had something to give you." "You can just give me your love and that will make me happy," replied the worker. But this was not enough for the child. She lifted her left hand and on one of the feeble fingers was a valueless ring. As the fingers of the right hand began to remove the ring, the child said, "This is all I have. My mother gave it to me. I love it but I love you so much more

than I love the ring, that I would rather you would have it." With these words she gave all she had to one she loved.

Oh, that every Christian in the land could come to the Christ with all they have, and look into His face and say "Lord, here is my all, my life, my wealth, my ability, my power. It is all I have. I love it, but I love Thee so much more than I love these, that I had rather Thou hadst my all." Then, with one gift place all that would glorify His Name into His hands, for His use, in the progress of His kingdom.

THE PRAYER

Our Heavenly Father, we desire to be in the spirit of worship, in this service. We have come to that part of it when we bring our gifts to the altar. As Thy servants of old, with prayers on their lips and gratitude in their hearts, brought their best to Thee in worship, may we, in this same act, be worshipful, and may our gifts be worthy of the sacrificial Christ whom we serve, and sufficient for the needs of the kingdom of God.

Blessing on the gifts, the givers, and the causes for which this money shall be spent, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

MAY—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"How much owest thou unto my lord?"—LUKE 16: 5.

CAN we arrive at any degree of definiteness, as to how much we should give to the cause of Christ? Yes, we can, and should. There is no justification for a man going through life always in doubt—usually giving himself the benefit of the doubt—in reference to how much he should give to the Lord's cause.

We can never know by figuring it upon the "postage stamp a week" basis. There still exists in New England "Cent Societies," which are relics of the early days, when the conception of the world-task was very imperfect. They may have been good in their day, and, if they have kept apace with the times, may be good even yet, but they, as well as the rest of us, need to be on guard lest Alexander the coppersmith should do us much evil.

The gifts of the rich, as Christ watched the alms box, that day, were "out of their superfluity." What they gave did not affect them. It was out of their surplus, and not out of their lives and love. This is the crux of the whole

matter. Whatever may be the financial ability of the giver, an offering, in order to be effectual, must be large enough to actually affect his spiritual life. If it be not large enough to be seriously felt, it will have no spiritual influence upon the giver.

Every one should give as much as his neighbour. We should give as much as he, and he as much as we. One may not be able to give as large an amount as another, but we should give as much as the other—namely, all. This was the simple meaning of our Saviour's words when He commended the widow for giving "all she had, even all her living." No one of us should stop short of this. No one can do more. All of us, should give all we are, and have.

THE STORY

MR. EHNES, one of the Secretaries of the Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board of Philadelphia, approached, in behalf of his Board, a man who was receiving an income of fifty-five thousand dollars a year, with the result that the man proffered a gift of three hundred dollars. This sum, Mr. Ehnes promptly declined and said to the man, "I do not want that. I want all you have. I want you to enter into partnership with Christ." The man was astonished and impressed. He afterwards gave enough to start a new Mission Station.

Henry Drummond said, "The entrance fee into the kingdom of heaven is nothing, but the subscription after one gets in is all he has." That is the measure,—"All that she had." All money, and all life.

The real difficulty in giving lies, not in determining the amount of money one should give, but in settling whether one gives his own self fully to the Lord. When this gift of self is really made, giving, or rather the distribution of money, becomes an easy matter.

THE PRAYER

Lord, help us to realize that Thou dost see clean through us. Enable us to see ourselves as Thou seest us. Reveal to us, not only our secret sins, but, also, the secret selfishness that lurks in the inner recesses of our hearts, and deceives us about our consecration to Thee. Give us to see that we cannot divide ourselves into compartments, some of which can be held for ourselves and some given to Thee. Everything—life and all—belongs to Thee.

Neither can we divide our possessions, devoting a small part to Thee and a larger portion to ourselves. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit we would decide how every portion shall be used in the most advantageous service to Thy kingdom. Give us our redemption in order that, with a complete consecration, we may likewise use everything we have, and are, for Thy glory. Amen.

JUNE—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."—ACTS 20: 35.

PAUL not only preached "all things" necessary to salvation, but also "all things" essential to intelligent obedience. The duty and privilege of giving, is included in the latter. We are not so prone to forget the former, as in John 3: 16; but we have to be urged over and over "to remember" such words of our Lord as cited above. "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven;" but "more blessed," still, is the "forgiven" man who gives.

THE STORY

IN a sermon to his church, a coloured minister is reported to have said: "Some of you say I'se gwine ter kill dis church if I keep a askin' yer to give, but, my brethren, churches don't die dat way. Ef anybody knows of a church dat died 'cause it give too much to de Lord, I'll go and climb up on de walls of dat church, under de light ob de silver moon, and cry: 'Blessed am de dead dat die in de Lord.'"

THE PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, thou gracious Giver of every good and every perfect gift, the never-failing source of all our material and spiritual bounties, breathe upon us thy Holy Spirit, and enable us to give in such a way that Thy Name shall be glorified, thy kingdom extended, and we "more blessed"; for Jesus' sake. Amen.

JUNE—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Bring ye all the tithes . . . I will . . . open the windows of heaven."—MAL. 3: 10.

ONE by one the doors of opportunity closed, until he came to the last one. That, too, was closing. A brilliant career in consular service, a prominent and lucrative connection with a world famous corporation, had slipped through the fingers of a drunkard. But in his extremity he found Christ, and in finding Him, he found victory over sin. Slowly he rebuilt his business. His faith in God, and love of Christ's church filled his life.

The yearly financial canvass came. A deacon visited him. They talked of the work of the church and God's promises to the tither. The storekeeper signed for an amount much larger than the committee had expected, and gave a check to help start the work of the year.

Early the following afternoon, a woman came into the store, and asked for her bill. The bill was large and so very old, that all hope of getting a cent on it had vanished. The storekeeper told her the amount, and, to his amazement, re-

ceived a check for the entire account. But a check is not always cash, and, being in doubt he took it to the bank on which it was drawn, and learned that, the day before, she had deposited an amount several times the size of the check.

Two days later, the pastor got this story from that man's lips: The check was for an amount more than twice the entire yearly pledge. "God stands back of His promises, pastor," was the conclusion reached by this man who had learned that tithing *does* open the windows for God's blessings.

THE STORY

IT was some days before Christmas. The teacher in the first grade of the public school, requested each one of the children to bring a toy, the next week, that the room might send boxes of playthings to poor children.

A little six-year-old girl went home, wondering in her tender heart, which of her toys she could afford to give? She thought of the games, the toys, all used and worn; the little doll-buggy, now wrecked by loss of parts; and then the dolls, some soiled and ragged. None of these seemed good enough to give to any child, and, yet, she thought she could not even consider giving her best doll, the one she loved like she loved her own life.

Her parents said: "You should not give toys that are worn, but the best you have." The little girl knew that this meant her very best doll. So the doll was neatly dressed, in its best dress. All evening she fondly caressed and loved it and, finally, took it to bed with her. This happened for three evenings in succession. The child had a hard struggle, trying to make up her mind to let her best go. On the morning of the fourth day, she arose and said, "I'm going to take my best doll to school, to-day, for the poor

children." Presently, she skipped off to school, happy that she was giving her best to make some one else happy and more cheerful for the Christmas season. A loving mother heard of this sacrifice and, before Christmas came, gave the little girl a still more beautiful doll.

Christ gave His best for us. He who gives his best for the progress of the Church and the kingdom of God, will ever be blessed of the Lord and happy in His work.

THE PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, give us faith to know that Thou art the best paymaster. Put that daring into our lives which is needed in order that we may prove that money invested with Thee, pays the biggest dividends. Open up doors for us in this world, which will give us larger returns, that, with added funds, we may enlarge our work with them. Help us to be honest, and true, and faithful, with that which is entrusted to us, just now. For Jesus' sake we ask it. Amen.

JUNE—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him."—DEUT. 15: 14.

THE liberal man will ever be rich; for God's providence is his estate, God's wisdom and power are his defense, God's love and favour are his reward, and God's word is his security. These resources, obtained before the creation of man, and were proclaimed in full recognition of all possible human circumstances. No earthly exigency can arise, that will dissipate or deflate them in the remotest degree. He who gives with liberality draws on heaven's exchequer and follows a Divine example.

THE STORY

ANDREW FULLER, when on a begging tour for the cause of missions, called on a wealthy nobleman to whom he was unknown, but who had heard much of Fuller's talents and piety. His lordship thought he would make him no donation. Dr. Fuller was preparing to leave, when the nobleman remarked that there was one man to whom, if he could see him, he thought he would give something for missions, and that man was Andrew Fuller.. Fuller at once replied, "My name is Andrew Fuller." On hearing this, the peer gave him a guinea. Fuller looked him in the face with gravity, and said, "My lord, does this donation come from your heart? If it does not, I do not wish to receive it." The nobleman was melted and overcome by this honest frankness. Taking from his purse ten guineas more, he said, "these, sir—*these*—come from my heart."

THE PRAYER

O God of all grace, Thou hast made our physical bodies holy, by the habitation of the Spirit. Take, Thou, this material offering at our hands, and constitute it a spiritual service, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

JUNE—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my Lord?"—LUKE 16:5.

DO *we owe God anything?*

1. This depends on what God has done for us. We pay rent to a landlord, taxes to the government, hire for services of other men.

2. What have we received from God? Life, health, sound bodies, food, raiment.

How much do we owe God?

1. Heathens paid a tithe to their idols.

2. Jews did as much, and took the first and the best they had, no faulty thing being given.

3. The Christian should not do less. Our gifts are to be gauged by our blessings.

How should we pay God what we owe Him?

1. Religiously.—Mal. 3:10.
2. Regularly.—1 Cor. 16:2.
3. Promptly.—2 Cor. 8:11.
4. Gladly.—2 Cor. 8:3.

THE STORY

THERE has just come to me a fresh story, by a German missionary, doing work among the gipsies in Europe. It is generally known that the gipsies are given to stealing petty things, it is a trait that seems to have been born with them. On one occasion, one of them stole a Bible. He did not know what book it was, nor its value, but the hope of selling it for a few pennies, was his sole purpose in taking it. As it was gilt-edged, it seemed more attractive, and the little group began to examine it. One in the party could read, so he began to decipher its message. It became so interesting that they would hardly consent for him to stop.

For several days the gipsies gathered at their wagons, and had this one read from the stolen book; it was a strange message to them, they had never heard its story before. Finally, the man that had stolen the book began to feel smitten in conscience and wanted to take it back, but the rest did not want to part with it. The result was, that several of them began to be in great distress, and told other gipsies about the book and its strange teachings.

In the meantime, one of the German missionaries chanced to stop one day and preached to

them. They quickly opened their hearts to his message, and many were saved. A little church was soon formed, which has grown into a work of great importance. The stolen book taught them not to steal, and inspired them to a higher life, and the influence of that Book lives yet.

Our gifts to-day go to the Bible Society for the free distribution of the Scriptures.

THE PRAYER

We pause, O God, to ask for wisdom, that we may do our duty intelligently. Reveal to us our obligations to Thee for all Thy bountiful gifts to us, and help us to see our duty to our fellow man, whose salvation Thou hast charged us with. Help us to realize that Thou hast made us partners with Thyself in saving the lost of the earth, and that our gifts, together with ourselves, are far too small to compensate Thee for what Thou hast done for us. Give us a new conception of Thee, and of Christianity, and of our responsibility as Thy messengers in this great cause, and help us to measure up to our opportunity, that no blame shall rest on us, if men are not saved. May the spirit of devotion and worship prompt our gifts, and guide our hearts, and enlarge our souls as we bring our offerings and lay them at Thy feet, trusting that Thou wilt use them in sending Thy Gospel to the ends of the earth. Amen.

SECOND QUARTER—EXTRA SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"And when they heard these things (about giving) the Pharisees also, who were covetous . . . derided him."—LUKE 16: 14.

WHEN Jesus had finished telling that wonderful story about the wise steward, and had applied it to the question of making and handling money, the record says: "The Pharisees also, who were covetous, hearing these things, derided him." They do yet. Whenever the preacher says anything about money, or urges giving, or takes up a special collection, every covetous old Pharisee goes around growling, "That's all they are after." Just listen in the vestibule, at the close of a service when there has been a big collection, and you will speedily discover every Pharisee!

THE STORY

"BRETHREN, we will take our offering for foreign missions next Sunday," I said to my church. "I have a letter from our secretary, suggesting an amount for our church, which I think is reasonable," and I named the amount. I compared it with our large membership and our resources. Then I said, "This is the minimum for our offering. Certainly we ought to give, not less, but more. I hope we may have a large attendance next Sunday, and that our collection will be worthy of our great church."

The congregation was dismissed, and one of my deacons, a shrewd man and the wealthiest man in my church, came to me and said: "Pastor, I agree with you about the collection. Our church ought to give what you have asked for, and it will, if all of us just come up, and do our part. I will certainly do mine. I have just made a calculation, and find that the amount you have asked us to give, is exactly fifty cents per member for our church, and here is my fifty cents." Whereupon, he handed me a silver half-dollar.

If this deacon were worth five cents, he was worth one hundred thousand dollars—the richest man I had. I felt as if he had turned a hose

on me. He ruined the collection. Stewardship is not a question of equality in dollars. It is a question of ability: "Every one of you" . . . it is personal. "According as God has prospered you" . . . it is proportionate. Responsibility is measured by ability.

THE PRAYER

Our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the world-wide missionary program of our church, and our beloved denomination. Thou hast called us to preach the Gospel to every creature, but we cannot all go personally to do this work. Most of us must remain at home, and make the money to take care of those who go. Help us, then, to realize, in making our offerings, that we are in truth giving that much of ourselves to the preaching of Thy Gospel around the world. Enlarge our vision and inspire our hearts to dedicate the fullest possible measure of our means to this worthy work. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

JULY—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; A land of wheat, and barley, and vines and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee."—DEUT. 8: 7–10.

SURELY America, with only six per cent. of the world's population and possessing twenty per cent. of its gold, forty per cent. of its silver, fifty per cent. of its zinc, sixty per cent. of its copper, sixty-six per cent. of its oil, forty per cent. of its railroads and eighty-five per cent. of its automobiles, should bless the Lord, with her whole heart.

THE STORY

A YOUNG man came to our city, from the country, several years ago and secured employment at about a dollar and a quarter a day. At my suggestion, he adopted the tithing plan. His testimony, given some years later, was to the effect that tithing had proven a great blessing to his life. When the Baptist Seventy-five Million Dollar Campaign was launched, this tither subscribed twenty-five hundred dollars. He paid that amount, and more, during the specified five years, and is now giving to all our denominational interests, on a much larger basis, than the amount referred to above.

THE PRAYER

Our Gracious Father, we thank Thee for this universe, our dwelling place. Thou hast given it us to possess for a time, providing for us a habitat of unlimited spaciousness, and of a beauty unspeakable. Thou hast set Thy splendour everywhere,—

> *"On mountain heights,*
> *In woodlands dim with many a dream*
> *In valleys bright with springs,*
> *And on the curving capes of every stream."*

Thou hast carpeted our dwelling-place with the verdure of the recurring springs, studded its ceiling with the ineffable glory of the stars, and hung upon its walls a myriad tapestry in far-flung horizons of primal forests and the everlasting hills. O Lord, to-day, accept the gifts we bring, as expressing the gratitude of our hearts, and may they be indeed a rental return to Thee, worthy of the majesty and beauty and wonder of Thy universe, which to-day we inhabit, and which, to-morrow, we shall bequeath to those, who under Thy providence, shall come after us. Our gifts are impotent, and pitifully inadequate, but accept them, we pray Thee, as the measure of our gratitude to Thee, for all the glory and beauty, with which Thou hast surrounded us. Amen.

JULY—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"But by an equality that . . . your abundance may be a supply for their want, and their abundance . . . for your want."—2 COR. 8: 14.

THE Macedonian Christians were poor in money, but rich in grace. The Corinthian Christians were rich in money, but poor in grace. Now, the Apostle asks the Corinthians for a large money gift, assuring them that the Macedonians would provide the other. "You do the paying," he says, in effect, "while they do the praying." Thus there is equality in responsibility and in duty discharged, by each supplying that which the other lacks. Many rich churches and individuals, who give their money generously, are blessed far more than they know, by the prayers of those who are helped by their gifts.

THE STORY

LET us go into the dairy business for illustration: We want, say, to secure sixty gallons of milk from one Jersey cow, within thirty days. Two plans suggest themselves:

First: We turn Old Jersey out in the lane, and let her take care of herself until about the twenty-ninth of the month. Then we drive her up, give her two bales of hay, a sack of bran, a sack of corn chops, and a sack of cotton-seed meal and endeavour to secure the sixty gallons of milk the next morning. The trouble with this plan is just this: it won't work.

Second: The plain, practical, common sense way by which to secure the sixty gallons of milk, is to feed the old lady regularly and systematically, milk her regularly and thoroughly, starting the first of the month, and not missing a single milking period. By the end of the month you will have had the sixty gallons of milk, and will have had, moreover, fresh milk every day through the whole period.

The regular and systematic plan of giving is in accord with the Scriptural plan of tithing, and is the practical, commonsense way to grow a church, and sustain a denomination.

THE PRAYER

Holy Father, we thank Thee for our denominational work throughout the world, for the marvelous growth of our people in numbers and wealth, and because, despite our faithlessness, as Thy stewards, Thou hast preserved our work and its institutions. For the support of all these kingdom enterprises, we now bring our offering, praying that Thou wilt help us to measure our gifts by the bigness of the task and opportunity. Put Thy blessing upon our gifts, and use them to extend Thy kingdom, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

JULY—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor."
—EZEK. 16:49.

JEHOVAH is warning Jerusalem, and cites the case of Sodom. Sodom lived luxuriously, and had abundance of bread and of idleness. But she did not help the poor and needy. Hence her fate.

Generous consideration of the needy, and liberal giving for their good, is a vent-pipe which lets off the poisonous gases of destruction, which accumulate with wealth and luxury and idleness. Any city which stops up that vent-pipe, will go the way of Sodom.

Our benevolences are our salvation. We should give, and get, all we can for them. No man who opposes them, is a friend to his city.

THE STORY

UNITED STATES Senator Vardeman, (so the story goes), once rented a plot of several acres, to one of his coloured neighbours. The land was to be planted in corn, and the Senator, then ex-Governor, was to receive one-fourth. The corn was duly harvested, but the Senator did not receive his fourth. Meeting the negro one day he said, "Look here, Sam, have you harvested your corn?" "Yes, sah, boss, long ago." "Well, wasn't I to get a fourth?" "Yas, sah, boss, dat's de truf, but dar wa'n't no fo'th. Dar wuz jes' three loads an' dey war mine." There are some white people who treat the Lord in something of the same fashion.

THE PRAYER

Holy Father, help us, we pray, to make our offering to Thee worthy, sacrificial, loving; remembering our Lord Jesus Christ, who though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. In His Name we ask it. Amen.

JULY—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."—MARK 10: 25.

RICH men who attain the power of wealth and still maintain their spiritual life, should be crowned as heroes of the highest order. There is an insidious something about money, that seems to eat into the very heart of man. To conquer it, is to deserve a crown.

It were easier a thousand times to conquer adversity than prosperity. For every man who is wrecked by adversity, a thousand are destroyed by riches.

We need not to offer any fantastic interpretation of this Scripture. Jesus meant exactly what He said. Rich men have a desperately hard time, entering the kingdom.

THE STORY

TWO young men were fast friends in college. One of them studied for the ministry. The other prepared to become a lawyer. Both were good students, active in athletics, and leaders in college activities. They finished college with honours. Each went his way.

Twenty-five years afterward, the minister became pastor of the church, of which the lawyer was a member. They had a long visit together to talk over old times. The lawyer confided that he had progressed and prospered in his profession, his income averaged twenty-three thousand dollars annually. The minister's salary was three thousand dollars. The minister was paying twenty thousand dollars a year for the privilege of preaching!

THE PRAYER

Heavenly Father, bring Thy truth to fruition to-day in our hearts, and increase in us the longing to be like Thy Son, who loved, and served, and suffered, and died, to redeem mankind from their sins. Amen.

AUGUST—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Bring ye all the tithes."—MAL. 3: 10.
"Bring an offering."—Ps. 96: 8.

GIVING is a part of worship, or should be. It belongs to the service of God's house, as much as singing or preaching, or praying. In fact, worship is incomplete, without the making of gifts.

Worship expresses *gratitude* for blessings received. To do this with lip-service alone, is not enough. It must be done in deed, as well as in word.

Worship expresses adoration for the glory and majesty and might of God. The gift which is brought into His house, is a token of acknowledgment that God has created all material substance.

Worship is a pledge of future life and conduct. The gift is a seal to that pledge. When God sees the gift, He is pleased at the remembrance of the pledge.

THE STORY

OLD man Taylor died, over in London, and, in the last moments of his life, began to squirm, as a good many other men do, when they look into eternity. He had never given away any money, but thought he could atone for his miserable life, by giving a thousand pounds to a certain institution in London. When the committee came to fix the matter up, the wretched old miser on his death-bed could not get away from his old habit. He squealed out and asked them if they would not give him ten per cent. off for cash. They decided to do it, and he died with a smile on his face, because he had made, or saved, a hundred pounds.

THE PRAYER

Our Heavenly Father, we would worship Thee in spirit and in truth! We believe the earth is Thine and the fullness thereof. Dwell within our poor hearts, and illuminate our minds! Accept our offerings, O Lord, for we gladly offer them unto Thee! Hasten the coming of Thy kingdom, into all the world; we ask these things in Jesus' Name. Amen.

AUGUST—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Then beware lest thou forget the Lord."
—DEUT. 6: 12.

DEUTERONOMY is God's book of reminders. He reminds His people to remember. He wants them not to forget. And in order that they may *not* forget, but remember, He gives them three institutions, as reminders. They are:

1. The Sabbath.
2. The Tithe.
3. The Home.

These institutions are intended to keep memory alive and fresh and fragrant. They cover, moreover, the whole range of life.

The Sabbath keeps the memory of God alive, in religious life, by regular worship.

The tithe keeps the memory of God alive in business life, for every tither is conscious of partnership with God, in all his business transactions.

The home keeps memory of God alive in social life, when the household is dedicated, and the family altar maintained.

THE STORY

THE pastor of a large and wealthy church was recuperating in the sanitarium from a serious operation. His people were beautifully attentive in their kindnesses and considerations. The sick room was a flower garden of gifts.

But the best of all came one morning when a red-headed, barefooted, freckle-faced boy came to the door holding a bungled up bunch of old-fashioned flowers.

When asked to come in, he walked timidly to the bed and said, "Bruver Pastor, we's been missin' you from Sunday school and church and I'se been wantin' to come see you and bring you sumpin' cause we love you for what you done for us, but I didn't have no money to buy nothin'. But I found these old flowers out in the fields, and I asked muvver if I might bring 'em to you cause we love you for what you done for us. They ain't fine flowers like these"—and his eyes scanned the room—"but we des love you—will you have them?"

Would the pastor have them? They were, easily, the sweetest in the room because they were the gift of love. No gift need be withheld because it is small, or poor, if there be love in the heart of the giver.

THE PRAYER

Holy Father, we thank Thee for our prosperous and peace-loving nation, and, that from its infancy, Thou hast watched over it and exalted it among the nations of the world. Keep Thy hand on its leadership, we pray, and make Thy throne in the hearts of its rulers. We, Thy people, rejoice when the righteous are in authority. We would, therefore, have every man who occupies a position of trust and responsibility know and love and obey Thee. To this end we bring our offering, for the support of this, Thy church and for the evangelization of our nation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

AUGUST—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse."
—MAL. 3: 10.

1. To give my tithe through my church is *scriptural.*

2. To give my tithe through my church is *simple.* It simplifies my problems of giving.

3. To give my tithe through my church is *sensible.* No citizen would think of designating his taxes to one particular department of the government.

4. To give my tithe through my church is *serviceable.* There it covers every phase of human need—physicial, mental, spiritual.

5. To give my tithe through my church is *sufficient.* If all would do this, there would be no lack.

6. To give my tithe through my church is *successful.* All causes share proportionately out of this common church treasury. On the direct method, some get all, and others nothing.

7. To give my tithe through my church is *sublime.* It glorifies God in the church.

THE STORY

THE secretary of a large city church came into the pastor's study one morning with a slip of paper in her hand and said, "This is a very remarkable record. Here are the names of twelve young people who have begun tithing. Before they began tithing they gave three hundred and fourteen dollars and seventy-five cents. This year they gave thirteen hundred and nine dollars and fifty cents." Later the pastor asked these young people to testify as to the results of tithing in their lives at the annual get-together meeting of the church when some three hundred members were present. This they did, greatly moving those present. At the close a good man said, "Pastor, I have been thinking about this thing a long time. These young people have convinced me. Count me a tither, from now on."

THE PRAYER

(*For Hospitals*)

O God, our Father, we come to Thee, to-day, in the name of our Christian hospitals. We have read in Thy Word how Jesus healed humanity's hurt, and how "the prayer of faith shall save the sick." We believe, that through the ministry of healing the body, the soul can be won to Christ, the more easily. We pray for our consecrated nurses, our godly physicians, our stately sanitariums. May we give of our goods for the privilege of emulating our Lord, in His great ministries of mercy; for His Name's sake. Amen.

AUGUST—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"How that, in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."—2 COR. 8:2.

"OUR minister is always talking to us about sacrifice. I am getting tired of it. He expects us to be giving all the time, and seems to think that the church is the greatest institution in the world."

"Perhaps he is right. But I agree with you that we can't always be giving to the church. There are other things we must think of. I am afraid our minister is visionary rather than practical."

The first speaker was a wealthy business man, and the second, a successful lawyer. Both had very large incomes; they lived, not only in comfort, but in luxury, and denied themselves nothing they felt it desirable to have. They were church members and gave "generously"; but neither of them really knew the meaning of the word "sacrifice."

A few months after this conversation, the two men joined a party that was going around the

world. Before they started, their "visionary" minister earnestly asked them to observe, and to remember, any unusual and interesting things they might see in the missionary countries through which the party was to travel. The men promised—carelessly, perhaps—to do so.

In Korea, one day, they saw in a field by the side of the road a boy pulling a rude plow, while an old man held the plow-handles and directed it. The lawyer was amused, and took a snap-shot of the scene.

"That's a curious picture! I suppose the pair are very poor?" he said to the missionary who acted as interpreter and guide to the party.

"Yes," was the quiet reply. "They are. That is the family of Chi Nouri. When the church was being built they were eager to give something to it. But they had no money, so they sold their only ox, and gave the money to the church. This spring, they are pulling the plow themselves."

The lawyer and the business man were silent for some moments. Then the latter said: "That must have been a real sacrifice."

"Chi Nouri and his family did not call it that," said the missionary. "They thought it was fortunate that they had an ox to sell."

The lawyer and the business man had not much to say. But when they reached home, the

lawyer took that picture to his minister, and told him the story.

"I want to double my pledge to the church," he said. "And give me some plow work to do, please. I have never known what sacrifice for the church meant. A converted heathen taught me. I am ashamed to say I have never yet given anything to my church that cost me anything."

How much does the average modern church member ever sacrifice for his religion? How many, that call themselves Christians, ever sold the ox, and then harnessed themselves to the plow?

THE STORY

DURING the World War a pastor announced to his people that he was going away with the soldiers. He expected to live with them, and preach to them, and help them in every possible way, until the end. The church was making an offering for the pastor to use in connection with his soldier service.

Among other gifts, there was handed to him a little note, scrawled out in lead pencil. It bore the signature of a Baptist preacher's widow. Enclosed with the note was a two and a half dollar gold piece. The note read: "Dear Pastor: My only boy has gone away to the war. This little piece of money is all that remains of what my husband left me when he died. I want you to take it with my love, and prayer, and blessing, and buy Testaments with it for the soldiers to read."

Wherever the pastor went, raising money for soldier welfare work, selling Liberty Bonds, etc., he told the story of this gold piece. The inspiration of that story raised over one hundred thousand dollars for the work. It bought thousands of Testaments and rendered untold service otherwise. The inspiration of one sacrificial gift fills the world with fragrance.

THE PRAYER

Our Father, Thou hast bestowed upon us the beautiful graces of faith, and hope, and love. Grant unto us, now, that the grace of a great liberality may also abound in our hearts, and find expression from our hands, as we make our offering to the support of Thy work. We know that the lack of liberality will make for smallness and narrowness of life and we want to be large, and noble, and generous. Help us by Thy spirit so to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour and so to follow His example, that we may give as He gave—to the utmost—of all our power and possessions. This is our prayer, in His Name. Amen.

SEPTEMBER—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Give, and it shall be given unto you."—LUKE 6:38.

ALL too often we lay the stress upon the frequency of the demands made upon us, saying with a sigh, "The poor we have with us, always." But we do not look sufficiently upon the rewards of true generosity. "The liberal soul shall be made fat."

The old riddle is true:

A man there was, though some did count him mad,
The more he cast away the more he had.

But Gaius guessed it, saying, He who bestows his goods upon the poor, shall have as much again, and ten times more.

THE STORY

HE had made his way up from the bottom, and now held a high position with one of America's large corporations. His services had so pleased his company that they gave him a complimentary check for seventy-five thousand dollars. He came to his pastor and brought a check for seventy-five hundred dollars with this statement: "I have given the Lord His tithe from the very beginning of my life's labours. He has wonderfully blessed me in all my undertakings, so I hasten to bring to His storehouse His tithe." This man died, recently, the head of the great corporation for which he worked. Even great men are greater, as they faithfully and sincerely serve the Lord.

THE PRAYER

O God, we thank Thee that Thou art a giving God. Thou hast given to us, Thy children, bounteous gifts from a Father's love. Thou hast given us of Thyself, in the person of Thy Son, our Saviour. We thank Thee for this supreme gift of Thy love. Other myriads of Thy gifts fade into relative unimportance, in comparison with this unspeakable gift of Thy universal Love. As a consequence of this gift, help us to know, to-day, that we are not our own—that we are bought with a price. And under the consciousness of the stupendous purchase-price of our lives, may we bring our all to-day and dedicate it anew to Thy service. Take our gifts of pelf and self, and use them as Thou wouldst. They are, at best, but paltry trifles, in comparison with Thy unspeakable gifts to us. Forgive the puniness and paltriness of our gifts, and sanctify them to Thy service, magnifying them by the power of Thine almighty love. Amen.

SEPTEMBER—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Will a man rob God?"—MAL. 3:8.

"ASSUMING that the Lord expects as much of our Protestant churches as He demanded of the ancient Jews, American Christians have robbed Him of three hundred and fifty million dollars this year," said J. Campbell White. This reminds us of the terse saying of Dr. Riley, in his *Trial of the Robbers,*—that if a Jew gave one-tenth under the law, for a Christian to give less, under grace, is a *dis*grace.

When a man begins to amass wealth, it is always a moot question as to whether God is going to gain a fortune, or lose a man.

THE STORY

A SHREWD, industrious business man, who rarely ever attended church, and whose time, talent, and energy were consumed in making money, was prevailed upon by a friend one day to attend a church service.

The preacher announced that his subject was "Money." The visitor pricked up his ears, and with wide-open eyes and mouth was all attention. "First," the preacher said, "*make* all the money you can." The visitor nudged his neighbour and said, "That's great." "Secondly, *save* all the money you can," the preacher said. "That's fine," the visitor commented, "I never thought a preacher would give advice like that." "Thirdly," said the preacher, "*give* all the money you can." The visitor slumped in his seat, and muttered to the man who had brought him, "I want to get out of here. Why should he have spoiled a good sermon with that last point?"

THE PRAYER

Dear Shepherd of our souls, Thou hast led us to the green pastures and refreshed us by the still waters. Thou hast furnished a table before us; our cup runneth over. Surely we shall not be guilty, in the face of Thy bounty, of gathering up the fragments—the crumbs that fall from the table—to present to our Great Host, as the measure of our gratitude? Help us to give Thee of the best, to give largely, that our joy may be full. We ask in the Name of Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SEPTEMBER—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"—1 JOHN 3: 17.

"If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?"—JAMES 2: 15–16.

THE poor and helpless and needy we have with us, always. Among the institutions in which, and through which, we help all such, in an organized capacity are:

1. Orphans' homes. The appeal of the homeless, hapless, chanceless child comes to us through these homes.

2. Church hospitals. In these institutions the spirit of Christ is at work in the realm of human suffering for the healing of humanity's hurt.

3. Old people's homes. Those who have come down to the decrepitude of old age without friend or family upon whom to personally lean, and are dependent upon the Christian

charity of God's people, call to us through these institutions.

4. Old ministers' relief organization. If the preacher, in the day of his power, tries to save money, he is criticized as being a gold-grabber. If he does not save money, he is criticized as being improvident. Usually he works longer hours, and on the smallest salary, and raises the largest family, of anybody in the community. It is no wonder that so many of them arrive at old age, with their voice and powers gone, to find themselves dependent upon the brotherhood to keep soul and body together.

How can the love of God abide in the heart of any man, who, hearing the cry of these distressed and needy people, can be content to say, "I am sorry, but I cannot help you"?

THE STORY

SOME years ago, a young man in the city of Chicago had a very wealthy uncle. That uncle had special relation to this young nephew. He educated him as far as possible, sent him through college, and then to Yale to finish. Then he sent him to Paris for the final touches to his education, in order to make him a great architect. This young man came home to Chicago, sat down lazily, to wait for his uncle to die in order that he might inherit his property.

That uncle did go that way very suddenly but he had made a will as every wise man does. And in that will he expressed what his wish concerning his property was, and just where it should go. He left three million dollars to the poor children of Chicago, and only ten thousand dollars to his nephew. The young man cursed and writhed, in the agony of disappointment, and tried his best to break the will, take the money from the poor children, and get it for himself. He did not secure a dollar of it; and even if he had, it would only have cursed every minute of his life. If a man ever gets money after that fashion, it never brings him any sort of joy or blessing.

THE PRAYER

(*For an Orphanage*)

We praise Thy name, O God, for the gift of children. Our orphan children are our pride and joy. We pray for these little ones whom Thou hast given into our keeping, for physical and spiritual nourishment, for shelter and loving care. Make us to give of our means to support them as we would the sons and daughters of our own flesh. And may we lovingly assume this great responsibility for the sake of Him who loved little children, who blessed them, and used them as an illustration to point out the way to heaven. Amen.

SEPTEMBER—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."—MATT. 22:21.

BOTH God and the government have unquestioned claim upon the individual because they both contribute to the individual's peace and prosperity, health and happiness.

1. Both provide the opportunity to translate the natural resources of earth and air into wealth.

2. Both provide protection, the one police protection, the Other, providential protection, for the individual while he produces this wealth.

3. Whatever the government's rate of taxation may be, God's law of the tithe stands. The tithe means one-tenth of the individual's net income. If he renders to the government the taxes required, he should, also, render to God the tenth which is required.

4. The individual has no more right to say what part of his income he shall give to God's causes, than he has to determine what part of his income he will pay to the government for taxes.

5. Personal likes and dislikes of those who represent the government or those who represent God, cannot excuse the individual from rendering to both, what is theirs.

6. If that which is due the government, is not paid, means are sought by which it may be forcibly collected. If that which is due to God is not voluntarily paid, it is likely to be collected in some other manner. (Joel 1 : 4, 2 : 25.)

If the obligations to the government are promptly and faithfully met, the individual enjoys the personal satisfaction and public reputation of being a good citizen. If obligations to God are faithfully and loyally met, the citizen of the kingdom of God has great satisfaction in his own heart, and enjoys the respect and esteem of others.

THE STORY

ONE of the men who learned the reality of the words of Christ, was Daniel K. Pearsons, the great philanthropist, who gave away, in all, about seven million dollars—enough to have builded and endowed a great "Pearsons College." But he chose rather to distribute his gifts where they would go with the gifts of others, so that much more good could be done, than would be possible in any institution he could build himself.

In 1909 he said: "I am having more fun than any other millionaire alive. Let other rich men go in for automobiles and steam yachts. I have discovered, after endowing forty-seven colleges in twenty-four different states, that giving is the most exquisite of all mundane delights. On my ninetieth birthday I am going to have a squaring up with all the small colleges I have promised money to, and I serve notice, now, that I am going on a new rampage of giving. I intend to die penniless. If there are any other millionaires who want to have a lot of fun, let them follow my example."

A little later, he said:

"I now have finished my career as a giver. I

had a good time making my money, and I have had a better time spending it. I am an old man now, and I have reached the limit. I have paid the last dollar of my pledges, and now I propose to rest. Henceforth, I will consider no more pleas. With this I retire. I lie down to-night a free man. I do not owe a dollar in the world."

In explanation of his giving to colleges he made this further statement: "I gave to colleges because I believe in young manhood and young womanhood. I gave to poor colleges because I believe in young people who have to struggle. I gave to Christian colleges because I believe that education without character is a very doubtful blessing."

Finally, he gave his home to the town, for a library, and retired to a sanitarium, where he died in 1912, being then, more than ninety-two years old.

THE PRAYER

Lord God of Hosts, grant unto us an ever-increasing consciousness of the fact that we are but stewards of Thy manifold mercies—custodians of the trust committed to us. Amplify our appreciation of the fact that money is not the major criterion of success in life. It avails us nothing to say, "I am rich and increased in goods," if we are not rich toward Thee. May the offerings we present at this time be a suitable indication of our sincerity and love; in the name of Christ our Lord, we ask. Amen.

THIRD QUARTER—EXTRA SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store."—1 COR. 16:2.

THE Bible method of giving is, for each individual to bring into the storehouse of the Lord the tithe and offering. To undertake to raise money for Christ's church by any other method will hurt rather than help. The very questionable method of raising money by having suppers, bazaars, shows and what-not, has a great many serious and objectionable faults.

In the first place, it is not Scriptural. The Scriptural method is "bring your tithe into the storehouse." The Scriptures say, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store." The bazaar and supper method violates these Scriptures.

In the second place, the bazaar and supper method is not fair to legitimate business. The restaurants, ice-cream parlours and stores with which the church competes, pay taxes and high rents. The church bazaar, which pays no taxes and no rents, is an unfair competitor, and creates a resentment, especially among unsaved people.

In the third place, the bazaar and supper method of raising church funds does not pay. Frequently, the bazaars and suppers cost more than they bring in. They certainly cost more of time and effort. The same time and effort expended in the spiritual work of the church, would mean a great deal more for the cause of Christ, than the few paltry dollars raised by this method.

In the fourth place, the supper and bazaar method destroys the spirituality of the church. It puts the life of the church on a worldly basis. Churches should have a great deal of social life for the purpose of getting acquainted, and thereby increasing coöperative efficiency in church work, but these should never be money affairs.

In the fifth place, these methods often result in church fusses. Little irritations and misunderstandings arise in such affairs, which result in serious confusion throughout the entire church.

In the sixth place, this method of raising funds lowers the dignity of the church. Imagine the Apostle John turning an ice-cream freezer, or Mary and Martha selling doilies, or serving oysters at a church affair! This is the merest piddling at nothings, when churches and church members ought to be engaged in higher, holier, bigger and better things.

THE STORY

A CONSCIENTIOUS, cultured, Christian woman came to her pastor to talk about her offering for missions. Unrolling a little bundle of paper and displaying a diamond ring, she said, "Thirty-five years ago my husband placed this on my finger as a token of youthful love and devotion. During the twenty-five years of our married life it was an ever-present symbol of his faithfulness. During the nearly ten years of my widowhood it has been a shining suggestion of what our eternal love will be. But I do not feel that I can afford to wear diamonds, not even this one, when Christ's cause is in such need. With the heathen crying for the bread of life, and missionaries begging to be sent, I cannot afford diamonds. Please take this and sell it and put the money into the mission offering."

When the pastor attempted to expostulate with her on such a gift, she begged, "Do not deny me the joy and privilege of this gift. Remember Him who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross and held the sacrifice of it in contempt."

THE PRAYER

O God, our Holy Father, who art in heaven, we thank Thee for Thy gifts. We thank Thee for this service, and for Thy blessed Gospel. We thank Thee for our churches and their work, for the great leaders and workers of the past, and for our mighty hosts of faithful witnesses, at this time. For our glorious country, a land of Christian homes, churches and schools, we are grateful. For the ties of loved ones we sincerely thank Thee. But our Father, most of all, we thank Thee for salvation, made possible through the sufferings and death of Christ our Saviour. For it is by Him that we are redeemed. We praise Thee for Thy love-gift—our great Saviour. Now we come in His Name, to make this offering. May Thy grace make it worthy, and help us each one so to give, that He who gave Himself, and now sits over against the treasury, will be well-pleased with our gifts. Father, accept us, our service, our love, and our love-gifts, and use all to extend Christ's kingdom in all the world. This we ask and offer in Christ's Name, and for His sake. Amen.

OCTOBER—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."—LUKE 16:8.

THIS steward was commended for his wisdom, sagacity, foresight. He was wise because:

1. He properly recognized his position as a steward and not the owner:

2. He wisely prepared for the day of reckoning:

3. He subordinated immediate ends to future gain. He did not grasp at the near, and lose the distant:

4. He subjected the smaller substance to the greater good.

THE STORY

IN his quiet and beautiful home a New England manufacturer told me this story, as friend to friend: Ten years before, he and his wife had left their little home in Texas and arrived in Boston with a few dollars and an invention on which they hoped to cash in.

They were both Christians and had adopted the principle of the tithe, as a minimum of their financial obligation to Christ. They secured a modest little apartment and went to work. The man got material enough with the money he had, to make by hand, one or two pieces of his machinery. He packed these on his shoulder, and peddled them out around town. They worked hard, lived modestly, attended church, and made some modest contributions.

At the end of the year, when they checked up their business, they found they had some of the Lord's money on hand, out of the unapportioned tithe. Each one wondered what the other wanted to do with it. The calls for their machine were more than they could supply. They needed money badly, to finance the next year's business. Should they use all this money in their business? Should they borrow it from the Lord, or should they give it? For two weeks, each

one debated these questions without knowing what the other was thinking. Finally, one of them broke open and said, "What are we going to do with that extra money in our tithe?" The other one said, "Let us be faithful with it and give it to God's work and trust Him to help us through another year." They were both happy in the decision, and acted upon it.

In this, the tenth year of the business in Boston, they are selling machinery, all around the world. They have a large plant and building, all paid for, where the goods are manufactured. They showed me one contract, they were installing, at a sale price of eighty thousand dollars. They are still happy, tithing Christians.

THE PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we remember the words of Thy servant, exhorting us to lay by in store on the first day of the week as Thou hast prospered us. We thank Thee for the measure of prosperity which has attended our way, and we now gratefully and gladly bring into Thy storehouse on this Lord's Day, that proper proportion of all our income to meet the needs of Thy great work, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

OCTOBER—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"And the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly."—2 CHRON. 31 : 5.

THE tithe which is "holy unto the Lord" (Lev. 27 : 30) means one-tenth of the net income. The net income is the amount remaining after the necessary expenses, incurred in producing that amount, have been deducted.

The necessary expenses include rent, hired help, interest, lights, water, implements, utensils, and all such that are absolutely necessary in producing the income, but not personal expenses such as food, clothing, home, etc.

The tenth is a solemn debt to God Almighty. This debt has primary and supreme claim. It should have priority over grocery bill, dry goods bill, or any other personal obligation.

Sometimes one feels that he cannot give the tenth because he owes it to his wife and children to feed and clothe and educate them. He forgets that he owes it to them, also, to provide religious privileges and opportunities. This obligation to one's own children should take precedence over any other needs they have.

THE STORY

"Old Deacon Horner,
He sat in the corner
As the contribution box passed by;
Sweetly content
He dropped in a cent,
And said, 'What a good churchman am I!'"

THE PRAYER

O God, we cannot bless our gifts, and if we were to pronounce words of blessing upon them they would still be not our gifts, but Thy gifts, entrusted to us for proper distribution. Accompany them, we pray Thee, as they go out with Thy Gospel, to the ends of the earth. Amen.

OCTOBER—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil."—1 TIM. 6: 10 (R. V.).

MONEY mastered makes a mighty servant, but money, as master, is a terrible tyrant. It tyrannizes over the body, mind and soul of man. Uncontrolled by high ideals and noble principles, wealth grinds the life blood out of women and children; it wrecks the physical and mental life of men; it bribes legislation, corrupts the courts, and works a thousand ills.

America is getting rich, ravenously rich. And, unless she masters her money and utilizes it usefully, her very soul will be eaten out. We may possess wealth, but should never allow wealth to possess us. The image of man may be stamped upon money, but the dollar-mark should never be stamped upon man.

THE STORY

ROBERT HALL, the great preacher, was talking one day to a noted man, who claimed to be an atheist. In his conversation with the great man of God, the atheist argued the question, and said, decisively, that he did not believe in God. Robert Hall took in the situation for a few minutes, and then drew from his pocket an old envelope, on which he wrote in capital letters the word "God." Turning to this intellectual specimen of infidelity he said, "Do you see that?" The man responded immediately, "Certainly, I do." Then Robert Hall took an English sovereign out of his pocket and placing it on top of the word "God" said to the man, "Now, do you see it?" He said, "No, sir, I do not." Not another word was said. Robert Hall picked up the sovereign and envelope and left the room, but the moral was plain.

This was the man who had been living in the world for money. He had been spending his money selfishly. And that money which he had earned, and saved, and spent contrary to the will of God, had blinded his vision of the Eternal, and it only took an English sovereign to turn his face in the other direction, where, at last, he *did* see God, and lived a Christian life.

THE PRAYER

Our Saviour and our Lord, as came the Wise Men from the East, so come we, to worship Thee, and offer Thee our treasures, in token of all we have and all we are, and all we hope to be. Accept and bless our offering, we ask in Thy Name. Amen.

OCTOBER—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."—ROM. 14: 12.

FIRST and foremost, one's religion is a personal matter. It is the privilege of each individual to adopt any religion he will, or none at all.

One's religion is also a personal responsibility. A man owes duties to God, which, if he were ever so wealthy, he could not hire someone else to perform for him.

It is the responsibility, privilege and duty of each individual to repent and believe for himself. Neither father, nor mother, nor teacher, nor preacher, can do these things for him.

It is just as imperative that every one shall do his own giving. The father cannot do the giving for the mother and the children any more than he can do their repenting or their believing. It matters not how many be in a family each one should have his own church envelope and should do his own giving. If there is but one income, the tenth of that income should be distributed among all the family who are members of the church, for their gifts.

THE STORY

THE electrician argued that it was impossible for him to spare ten per cent. for the church out of a salary of one hundred and forty-six dollars per month. He was asked to carefully estimate where every dollar of his income had gone, during the preceding six months. Later, he reported that he and his wife had discovered that they had been spending seventeen per cent. of their income on non-essentials, in some cases on things they would have been better off without. He confessed that he had spent seven dollars and fifty cents a month on tobacco, alone. Later he said, "After I have put aside ten per cent. for the Lord, I am still ahead seven per cent. over my former haphazard expenditures."

THE PRAYER

Dear Lord, we realize that we live and move and have our being in Thee. Every good and perfect gift is from Thee and cometh down from above. Thou hast blessed us with material things in this life. We bring our offering to Thee, and consecrate it to Thy service. The gift represents our time, our talent, our energy. We cheerfully give it to Thee, for the progress of Thy kingdom. Use it for Thy glory and bless, to-day, every giver and all who desire to give to Thee, in the Name of Christ. Amen.

NOVEMBER—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

2 CORINTHIANS 8: 1–15.

PAUL presents a powerful plea to the Corinthian Christians for glorious giving.

It is a seven fold plea:

1. A plea for a symmetrical Christian life. (Vs. 7.)

2. A plea to prove the sincerity of love. (Vs. 8.)

3. A plea based upon the example of Christ. (Vs. 9.)

4. A plea for the exercise of strong will-power, in carrying out that which was purposed. (Vs. 11.)

5. A plea to the sense of justice that all should share equally in the responsibilities. (Vs. 13.)

6. A plea for mutual burden-bearing. (Vs. 14.)

7. A plea based on harvest-time. (Vs. 15.)

THE STORY

I KNOW a young man (and I know many like him), who, in his young manhood, waited a half-dozen years to get married, because he did not receive income enough to establish a home; but he never failed to put one-tenth of his weekly wages in a box for God. When he was struggling his hardest, he came to me and said, "I have one hundred dollars ready for God in my box. What can I do with it?" He now has three houses and lots, and a home, and he still has God's money-box.

Some people wonder why they are poor! I do not. This may not be the only reason, but it is one of them: Most of the men, to-day, who are generous givers in the kingdom of God, started when they were boys, religiously giving one-tenth to God. Somehow, God prospered them, and cared for them.

THE PRAYER

O Lord of Life, we thank Thee this morning for the gift of life. Help us to use it wisely. Teach us so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Make us reverent and humble in the presence of Thy innumerable gifts. We thank Thee for friends, for loved ones, for food, for health, for books, for flowers, for sunshine, for rain. May Thy every sort of gift awaken a warm response in our hearts, and convert us from casual accepters of Thy gifts, into conscious and radiant focus-points of the richness of the life which is, and the glory of the life which is to be. God forbid that our gifts to Thee, be niggardly and mean. Under the consciousness of Thy uncounted gifts to us, we come, to-day, to offer our gifts to Thee. Accept them, O Lord, as the measure of our gratitude and our love to Thee, and of our devotion to our fellowman. We ask it in the Name of Him who gave Himself. Amen.

NOVEMBER—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Salute the church."—ACTS 18:22, ROM. 16:16.

THE church provides for you:

1. *A house of worship,* erected at much cost and sacrifice.

2. *Spiritual preaching,* designed to instruct, and inspire.

3. *Sacred music,* which awakens devotion, inspires worship and stimulates service.

4. *An atmosphere of Christian fellowship,* in which personal contacts are made that make life sweeter and purer.

5. *A Bible School,* with a consecrated staff of officers and teachers giving freely of their time and talents for the sake of the future which is in the boys and girls of the present.

6. *Men's organizations, women's and young people's societies* in which study programs, social hours and service efforts are provided.

7. *A loyal membership,* doing all of this for you. What are you doing for the church?

THE STORY

IT is impossible to hold either a child, or a man, in the church unless he has the habit of giving. Those who never pay seldom pray, and soon get out of the habit of church attendance. One of the surest ways out of the church is by the path of non-support. The parents of three growing boys recently told the story of how the sixteen and eighteen-year-old boys had lost all interest in the church. The mother stated that she was quite sure their loss of interest began, when they stopped paying their pledges to the church.

This problem of dividing money with the Lord, therefore, is a bigger question than merely getting the money. It is a question of securing and holding the affection of men and women, and boys and girls. It is a question of tying their interest and devotion to the great cause, for which Christ gave His life. It is not a question of raising money at all; it is a question of raising men. It is not a question of securing tithes; it is a question of securing tithers. It is not a question of getting the gift, but of conserving the giver.

THE PRAYER

Our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this beautiful house of worship, in which we meet. We thank Thee for the inspiring music and the soulful songs. We thank Thee for the preaching of Thy Gospel. Help us, now, as we come to make our offerings for the support of this work. Grant that our gifts may be in proportion to Thy goodness, and to the gratitude which our own hearts feel. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

NOVEMBER—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?"—ISA. 55:2.

MUCH money is spent for that which poisons, weakens, ruins, destroys life. America spends more on tobacco than on education. Bootleg liquor, dope, poisonous cosmetics, hurtful amusements, and salacious literature, all come in under the riot of spending money for that which is not life, but death.

Character is revealed by the way one spends money, quite as much as by the way he makes it. There are seven major needs which call for legitimate spending. They are: food, shelter, education, business, government, recreation and religion. Beyond these, one should think and act with exceeding care.

THE STORY

A YOUNG woman inherited her father's fortune, and her father's death-bed request for her was, that she take the money, which his hands had earned and his life of labour and burden-bearing had given her, and use every dollar of it in the best way she could for God.

Then that young woman took her father's inheritance, and lavishly spent it on herself. She lived luxuriously, in the world's pleasure, abandoning church and everything that was good. She had everything that she wanted, until the money vanished. Her health went, her friends disappeared, and she was soon to meet God before His judgment throne. She told a friend that there was absolutely no hope for her. "I have been a traitor to a holy trust," she said. "I used God's money for myself, and I never found any pleasure in life. Now health is gone, and everything is gone, and I am facing death and there is no hope, because I was a traitor with God's money."

She knew no life. There was no life for her in the spending of God's money, and there is no real life for *you,* when you are spending His money on yourself. It is always paralyzing. Somehow or other, the calamity is destined to come, and it usually comes before death does.

THE PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for our Christian colleges. We remember that a large part of our Master's life was consumed in teaching. We believe that our Christian colleges are carrying out His will, and that Christian education is the Spirit of Christ at work in the realm of intellectual need. We are glad to make our offering to the support of these institutions, and pray Thy blessings upon them. Amen.

NOVEMBER—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Give us this day our daily bread."—MATT. 6: 11.

WHEN we pray this prayer, God answers it by providing the means by which we may secure the blessing that is sought. He furnishes the fields and the forces with which to make it. We furnish the labour. Scientists say that ninety-five per cent. of all energy, used in the production of food products, comes from outside the one who does the work. God asks that a proportionate part of the income be returned to Him. Has any one a right to pray this prayer, who does not make an adequate return to the one from whom he seeks and secures that aid? Is he "toting fair" with God, who uses God's land and light and then refuses, or fails to divide the income?

THE STORY

THE other day a little girl told me she was going to give her father a pair of slippers on his birthday. "Where will you get the money?" I asked. She opened her eyes like saucers, and she said, "Why, father will give me the money." And just for half a minute I was silent, as I thought of the dear man who would buy his own birthday present.

I was not in the house when she gave him the slippers. But I suppose when the father came down in the morning, the parcel was there between his knife and fork. And the father loved his little girl for her gift, although he had had to pay for it. She had not anything in the world, that he had not given her.

That is just what I want to tell *you*. You have not anything of your own to give to Jesus Christ. You can only give Him back what belongs to Him. When Christ says, "Give Me something," and you say, "I have nothing to give," He further says: "I will put back into your own care and keeping—into your own proprietorship,—and if you really love Me for love's sake, you may give yourself back to Me."

THE PRAYER

And now, O Lord, as we worship Thee with our gifts,—we would remember that the harvests are Thine and the cattle upon a thousand hills. Take, therefore, a small measure of what is Thine as we bring it to Thy altar, and consecrate it by Thy Spirit, to the accomplishment of the work upon which we are launched. We thank Thee, this morning, that we may contribute to the work of Thy kingdom—and thus, in a very real sense, become partners with Thee, in the salvation of the world. May our gifts, to-day, be worthy of that partnership and worthy of the high mission to which we are called. Lift up our eyes unto the hills; give us a vision of the world's need, and may our giving, to-day, reflect our alertness to our responsibility, and to our exalted privilege. Amen.

DECEMBER—FIRST SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness."—LUKE 16:9—R. V.

ONE cannot serve God *and* mammon at one and the same time. But he can serve both God and man *with* mammon. Furthermore, he can make everlasting friends in doing so.

When one uses his money to feed and clothe orphan children; to heal the sick and suffering; to educate poor boys and girls; to send missionaries he has made friends for himself, forever, by means of the mammon of unrighteousness.

And these friends, some day, will be on the reception committee, to welcome him into the land of everlasting habitation.

THE STORY

A MAN wrote: "I have studied and prayed over the matter for three days since the conference, and have reached a definite decision to give at least ten per cent. to the Lord's work. It was one of the greatest experiences of my life, when I made that decision."

To put aside God's share, is not a question of giving to the minister, or of raising "funds" for the church, or of paying the janitor, or the coal bill, or giving a subscription to the finance committee. It is not a transaction at all between the individual and any other human being or institution. It is a transaction between himself and his God. It is a spiritual act. It is an act of worship. It is as much an act of worship as when he kneels in prayer, or partakes of the communion, or listens to a Gospel sermon. This lifts the whole subject of Christian giving and liberality, to the high plane upon which it was intended to be. So the first and biggest thing this money will do, is what it does for the man who gives it.

THE PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, we acknowledge Thee as the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Freely we have received from Thee, but it can hardly be said that freely we have given. But here and now, our Father, in love our souls would bow, each heart fulfill its vow, some offering bring Thee now,—something for Thee. Amen.

DECEMBER—SECOND SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"If I were hungry I would not tell thee."—Ps. 50: 12.

WHEN God asks gifts of gold from the children of His love, it is not because He is in need. The gold and the silver are all His, the earth and the fullness thereof.

> It is not money that He wants, but men;
> Not coin but character;
> Not tithes but the tithers;
> Not gifts but the givers.
> "Not yours but you."

He does not ask gifts that some want of His own may be satisfied, but in order that the giver may be sanctified. "It is more blessed to give than to receive," because the giver is benefited, spiritually, and eternally, while the recipient may receive only a temporary and physical benefit.

God asks gifts, for the sake and benefit of the giver.

THE STORY

THE "Kansas City Star" said editorially: "A wealthy New York man died a few days ago, leaving all his estate to his family. The community has a right to expect something better than this. He owed everything to the opportunity America gave him. It was not too much to think he would return a part of his wealth to the public."

A fine example,—the opposite of this,—is found in the will of the late Robert H. Stockton, President of the Majestic Manufacturing Company, St. Louis. He left an estate of about two million dollars, of which about one million, eight hundred thousand dollars was left to organizations of his own church. Two-fifths of this amount will go to a Christian college bearing his own name, and one-fifth to each of three departments of the national missionary society of his communion. His relatives expressed themselves as being highly pleased with the provisions of the will.

THE PRAYER

(*For Aged Ministers*)

O God, to-day we recognize our beloved soldiers of the Cross, who, through long years of toil and trial and tribulation, have given the best of their life's blood to Thy kingdom-work. They have borne the brunt of the battle, and have made easier the tasks for us, to-day. They have given their all, in love, without money and without price, and now, nearing the end of life's little journey, look to us for sustenance and shelter, during their few remaining days. May we not fail them. Make us to be liberal in their support. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

DECEMBER—THIRD SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"Give, and it shall be given unto you."—LUKE 6:38.

GIVING helps the giver, quite as much as those to whom the gift goes. It checks selfishness and saves from sordidness. It broadens the vision and enlarges the life. It cultivates love and sympathy and kindliness. It develops nobility of character and generosity of conduct.

To give is to live
To deny is to die.

The life of the generous giver is enlarged and enriched in every way. The penurious and stingy life is narrow, and little, and pinched and, finally, it wilts and dries and dies.

THE STORY

IN the year 1917, saved as to destiny of soul, lost as to service for the Master—the struggle of my life came in the effort of establishing a business of my own.

With the added responsibilities came a deeper conviction, then a new understanding—that of Christian stewardship, involving life itself. Impressed and inspired, His word revealed to me, in no uncertain terms, the fact of His ownership and my trusteeship. In the material increase, a tithe He claimed for His own, leaving me the privilege of love offerings. The Holy Spirit, I believe, revealed the truth and gave the grace to trust the literal, and thus the plan of God became the guide of my life.

To-day, eleven years later, I come to bear humble testimony to God's blessings. As to the material, God's tithe, in these eleven years, has amounted to within a few thousand dollars of the sum which was the goal of my early ambition. His tithe will equal this sum, no doubt, within a year.

Out of this provision has come the opportunity for a larger service, but the spiritual joy and satisfaction that is mine, has come through

the intimate relationship with God, as He counseled me in my plans through the years.

The experiences of Divine leadership, the confidence of His approval, the evidences of His love, contribute to peace and contentment in this life, and anchor my faith in life eternal.

Grace brings an enduring consecration dependent upon a power sufficient unto the end, while law, at best, maketh men which have infirmity.

" For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated forevermore " (Heb. 7:28).

May He, who is our Melchisedec of the New Testament, make known through grace the Most High God, possessor of heaven and *earth.*

THE PRAYER

(*For Christian Education*)

O God, we hold up to Thy throne, to-day, our Christian schools and colleges, our seminaries and training schools. Grant Thy favour upon them. In the Scriptures, Jesus, Thy Son, is more teacher than preacher; help us, therefore, to exalt the worthy profession of teaching by consecrated Christian characters, and to support our schools with our money and our means; for Jesus' sake. Amen.

DECEMBER—FOURTH SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

"And all the tithe . . . is holy unto the Lord."
—LEV. 27: 30.

WE hear a good deal about tainted money. Here is a statement about holy money: The tithe, or tenth, of one's net income is said to be holy money. It is holy like the Sabbath is holy; like vessels of the sanctuary are holy; like the Spirit of God is holy. Any misappropriation of it, any secularization of it; any use of it for mere personal ends, is, therefore, a desecration of that which is holy, sanctified, and set apart for sacred purposes. Holy money should be handled by holy men, for the honour of a holy God, in serving holy purposes.

THE STORY

I KNOW a man who worked, honestly and industriously, through many years of his life. On toward middle life his father died suddenly, leaving him a small fortune. He gave up his temperance and honesty and went into vice and drunkenness. If all the demons made up a combination to damn a man, they could not do worse than that man's father did for him. The best thing in the world, for him, was to earn his own living.

THE PRAYER

(*For Home Missions*)

O God, bless our native land. May she forever stand for the principles of our Christ. May we accept our tasks, in love, of leading the lost to our Lord. Here is an offering from our hearts, for our homeland. May it find fruition in saved souls, for Christ's sake. Amen.

FOURTH QUARTER—EXTRA SUNDAY

THE SCRIPTURE

2 CORINTHIANS 8: 1–15.

THE church in Macedonia was a poor people's church. That in Corinth, was a rich people's church. The poor people's church furnished spiritual power, the rich people's church was being asked to provide financial force. The two coöperating would help forward the kingdom of God.

But being poor and willing to pray was no excuse for not giving. The Macedonians gave what they could. Being rich and willing to give was no excuse for not praying. The Corinthians needed to cultivate spiritual life, by liberal giving. Therefore, the Apostle Paul held up the Macedonians as an example. They were an example in that:

1. Their gifts were an expression of God's grace, vs. 1.

2. Their gifts were bountiful in spite of poverty, vs. 2.

3. Their gifts exceeded their power, vs. 3.

4. Their gifts were free-will, voluntary offerings, vs. 3b.

5. Their gifts exceeded the highest hopes of the Apostle, vs. 4.

6. Their gifts were representative first of all in the gift of themselves, vs. 5.

7. Their gifts were according to the will of God, vs. 5b.

THE STORY

I KNOW a man who struggled in his business but it seemed as if the business were going to fail. He had only one thousand dollars a year income and he needed the money badly, but one hundred dollars of it went to Christ first. That man now gives three thousand dollars a year to Christ, as his tenth.

I know a man who has a most beautiful family. God never made him rich and never will. There are better things God can give you than money. He never gave me much money, but he has given me some much better things. God gave this man one of the most beautiful families I ever saw. The happiest kind of a home is his. He has come to me several times and said, "I have one hundred dollars of God's money ready. Where shall I put it?" Oh, how I like to meet such folks! God's money all ready to give to Him! "The greatest pleasure of my life," this man says, "is to deal out, conscientiously, God's money in the wisest and best way." And the greatest hardship, for most of us, is to deal out the merest pittance to God, when the collection-box comes around.

THE PRAYER

Our Father, as we come this morning with our offerings of money—the currency of the world's markets—make us sensitive to the necessity of giving ourselves with our gifts, and thus offering our larger contribution to the world's need, through the ministry of personality. We thank Thee for the Divine currency of human personality—the currency of the Kingdom of God. This morning, make us to know, the impotence of our gifts of money if unaccompanied by the larger gift of ourselves.

We humble ourselves, therefore, at Thy feet, and offer ourselves anew to Thy service. Multiply our offering this morning by the processes of Divine mathematics, and give to us, in the days and years ahead, the encouragement of seeing our personality investments magnified and multiplied in the lives of those with whom we come into contact. We thank Thee for the immortality of influence and the deathlessness of character, and we pray Thee, this morning, that our gifts may be worthy of their immortal destiny. For Christ's sake. Amen.